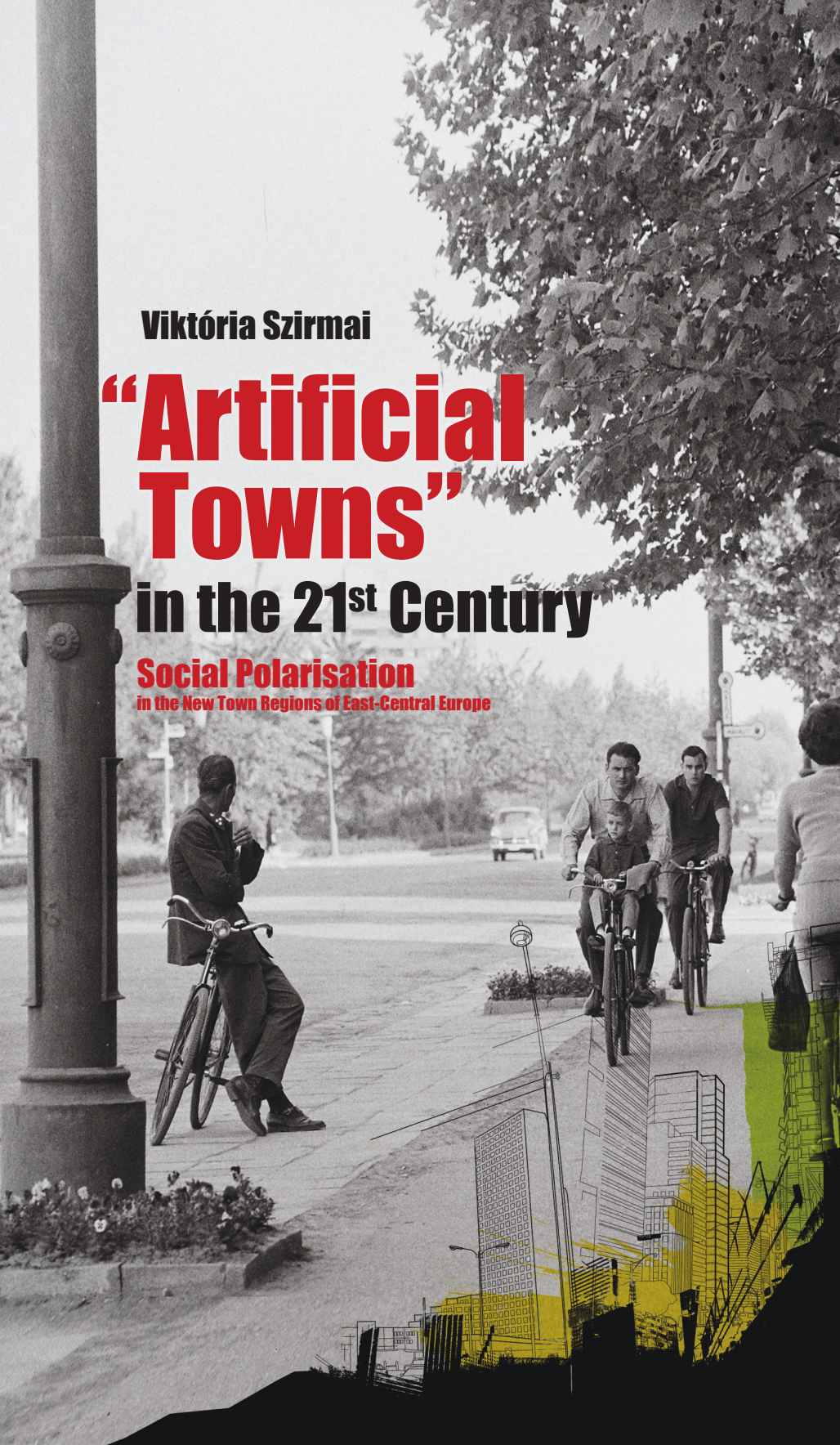

Viktória Szirmai

# "Artificial Towns" in the 21st Century

## Social Polarisation

in the New Town Regions of East-Central Europe

The central question of this book is that whether the development of new towns was the possibility of a new urban development model or an unfulfilled promise. Moreover, whether aspecial town type, different from any other town types, was created in the case of new towns in East-Central Europe, including Hungary. We want to answer this central question not by the method based on going back to historical traditions. The original town plans and urban planning doctrines have never been realised, they were always compromised partly due to momentary political interests, and partly to short-term economic, mainly cost-saving aspects.

This book describes the current trends, today's new town types and other urban models with their differences and similarities. Our aim is to find the still existing relevancies of the new towns' character, to reveal what the new towns of East-Central Europe are like today, whether they offer something else, something unique compared to other spatial formations, something that may explain why many people like, can and want to live in them and this could serve as a basis for building the future.

# “Artificial Towns” in the 21st Century

# “Artificial Towns” in the 21st Century

## Social Polarisation in the New Town Regions of East-Central Europe

Edited by Viktória Szirmai

Institute for Sociology
Centre for Social Sciences
Hungarian Academy of Sciences
Budapest
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Translated by György Váradi
Proofreading by Anikó Palásti



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*"Is there still living a choice between Necropolis and Utopia: the possibility of building a new kind of city that will, freed of inner contradictions, positively enrich and further human development? If we would lay a new foundation for urban life, we must understand the historic nature of the city..."*

Lewis Mumford (1961) The City in History.
Secker and Warburg, London 3.p.

# Content

# Recommendation

New towns were constructed in many parts of the world and in various periods since antiquity, including a lot of medieval cities, despite the fact that the Middle Ages was not a period of rapid urban growth in Europe. But what is considered as the "New Town Movement" took place during the 20th century after the publication of the famous book by Ebenezer Howard ("Tomorrow: a peaceful path to real reform", 1898, reprinted under the title "Garden Cities of Tomorrow) and translated into many languages. The first "garden cities" were built in the London area (Letchworth from 1903, Welwyn after 1919) and later on in France, in the United States and in many other countries (New Delhi, etc.).

But, between the two World Wars, the original New Town Movement faced a rival movement, developed by "modern" architects who organised the "Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne (CIAM)" and adopted the "Charte d'Athènes" (1933). After World War II, most architects and urban planners adhered to the CIAM principles and most reconstruction works as well as new urbanisation in Europe were attempts, although not always successful, to respect the rigid rules of the Charte d'Athènes. Only in Britain, the post-war new towns were in the line of Howard's theory and of the first garden cities. In the Netherlands, Sweden, Finland and elsewhere, new towns were planned according to the CIAM. As early as the 1930s, and after the war, more than one thousand "socialist towns" were built in the Soviet Union as applications of the Charte d'Athènes revised by the "constructivist" Russian architects. French new towns, whose construction was decided at the end of the 1960s, appeared as a compromise between Howard's and Le Corbusier's (the most famous of the CIAM group) ideas. In Central and Eastern Europe, the construction of new towns was decided, mostly in Poland and in Hungary, and built according to the "socialist town" model.

In most developed countries, from the 1980s, two questions appeared: 'Should we build a new generation of new towns? What should be done with nearly completed postwar new towns?' The answer has generally been that, due to the decline of demographic growth, and also under the dominant influence of "liberal" ideology, it was useless to build other new towns in the developed

countries. And for existing new towns, the best for them would be to become old towns.

In Russia and in other former socialist countries, including Central Europe, an additional question was: 'Can the socialist new towns, developed under strict state governance and planned economy, adapt to the new context of market economy and to self-governance? For these towns what have been the consequences of the regime change, of the demographic stagnation (if not a decline) and of the loss of economic priority having been given to mining and heavy manufacturing activities (which was the economic base of these postwar towns)?

The interest of the book edited by Viktoria Szirmai is precisely to scrutinise how the socialist towns of Central Europe coped with this brutal change of the political, economic and social context in the 1990s and 2000s. Through several studies written by the specialists of urban development from these countries, the book is concerned mostly with Hungarian new towns (chapters are devoted to Dunaújváros, Komló, Kazinbarcika and Tatabánya) but also with Polish (Tychy) and even Slovak ones (the small town of Nová Dubnica). It appears that these towns were handicapped by their narrow economic specialisations and by a population which was lacking middle- and upper-class families. But most of them succeeded in their adaptation to self-governance. The demographic and social evolution is more controversial. Some towns still have an unbalanced demographic structure, while other ones benefit from a better equilibrium due to ageing and the partial replacement of the original population. The economic level has generally increased, but the educated young population has difficulties to find jobs in towns still dominated by manufacturing activities and this induces significant out-migration.

The book is not limited to the history and the description of the present state of these new towns, not even to a presentation of the evolution since the drastic change of 1989. It includes a lot of comparisons, mostly based on the Hungarian situation: with large metropolitan areas, with other medium-sized cities, etc., in order to point out similarities and differences. The book is mostly written by specialists of social sciences and will concern mainly social planners.

What is the future of these socialist towns? For the main author, there are more questions than answers about their possible evolu-

tions: “What will the new towns do with their heritage? Are they able to build on the peculiarities they exclusively possess? Are they able to build on their past, on their special architectural endowments, on the activities of the inhabitants who are committed to their town? Are they able to actually accommodate the economic and social requirements of today and are they able to act for the benefit of transition? Are they able to renew? Do they have the ability to establish smaller and broader regional cooperation frameworks where cooperation, the joint exploitation of benefits and not the individual competition, and not the other party’s displacement is the goal?”. It would have been hazardous for the book to provide a clear prognosis. Factors at work are too numerous and mostly unpredictable to allow any forecast. But the analysis included in the book may help to decide what to do in order to help the socialist towns of Central Europe to turn into successful ‘old towns’.

Pierre MERLIN

*Professor at l’université de Paris-I (Panthéon-Sorbonne)*
*President of the Institut d’urbanisme et d’aménagement de la Sorbonne*
*(Town and Regional Planning Institute of the University Paris-Sorbonne)*

# Preface

Viktória Szirmai

## The missions of this book

The main mission of this book is to present the artificial towns, in other words the post-socialist new towns in the East-Central European context. The new town is not only a specific, but a unique city type in the framework of the "world city" map, because of the conditions of historical formation, and the features of contemporary transformations. Here we must immediately note that the book does not aim to completely describe the problem as that has been already done by several authors[1], including ourselves *(Haumont et al, 1999; Gaborit, 2010; Merlin, 1972; 1991; Merlin–Sudarkis, 1991; Provoost, 2010; Szirmai, 1988; 1991; 1998; 2013)*. The mission of this book (*"Artificial Towns in the 21st Century: Social Polarisation in the New Town Regions of East-Central Europe"*) is to present polarisation mechanisms, contemporary social structural relationships and their economic, political and architectural determination in new towns and their regions in Hungary, Poland and Slovakia.

Targeted structural analysis of social conditions was less present in earlier works. Although addressing social spatial inequalities and shaping local community life through providing favourable physical conditions including architecture and infrastructure were key planning goals in both Western and East-Central European

The study has been realised within the confines of the research entitled "Social Polarisation in the Hungarian and Eastern-Central European 'New Town' Regions: Impacts of Transition and Globalisation" (K 106169), funded by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office.

[1] See them in the extra summaries, for example in the Preface introducing Gaborit's book. *(Gaborit, 2010)*

new urban developments. This is why the special mission of this book as well as of the research project underpinning it[2] *(titled "Social Polarisation in the Hungarian and Eastern-Central European 'New Town' Regions. Impacts of Transition and Globalisation.")* is to explore and analyse the mechanisms of social polarisation in East-Central Europe. We were convinced that this research may provide new insights compared to previous works as it has been built on previous research results and goes even further.

This project was preceded by a comprehensive research project[3] titled *"Emergence of a New Urban Development Model? Transition and Globalisation in the Hungarian Regions and Their New Towns"*. The results were published in Hungarian *(Szirmai, 2013)*.

Under the research project we compared the social and economic conditions of Dunaújváros and Kazincbarcika, two Hungarian new towns, and of Baja and Gyöngyös, two traditional Hungarian towns and their regions. (We compared the Dunaújváros region in Central Hungary with the geographically close Baja region and the Kazincbarcika region in Northern Hungary with the nearby Gyöngyös region.)

During the course of the project embedded in European context we widened and partly changed research sites. As a result of this decision we examined the Tatabánya and Dunaújváros regions located in Central Transdanubia, the Komló region in Southern Hungary and Kazincbarcika and its region in North-Eastern Hungary. Another important difference is that we applied new research methods as well. Although the previous study was built mainly on social statistical analyses and in-depth interviews, the second project also featured a representative sociological sampling for the 11 Hungarian new towns and their regions. The

[2] The project realised between 2013 and 2016, was co-funded by the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund. The institutional framework for the research was provided by the Institute for Sociology Centre for Social Sciences Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The research was led by Viktória Szirmai. Project Reference Number: K 106 169

[3] The project realised between 2010 and 2012, was also co-funded by the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund. The institutional framework for the research was provided by the Institute for Sociology Centre for Social Sciences Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The research was led by Viktória Szirmai. Project Reference Number: K 81547

empirical sampling significantly improves the analyses by describing the main conditions of Hungarian new town societies by representative instruments. It also provides general knowledge, as this has been the first time that a comprehensive sociological survey has been made of all the new towns and their regions in Hungary.

To explore polarisation conditions in new towns as accurately as possible, we also made comparative analyses, made possible by representative sociological data sampling in two Hungarian large urban regions. The first one was carried out in 2005 with a sample size of 5000 in 9 Hungarian large urban regions with a population of more than 100 000 each[4], while the second one was carried out in 2014, also with a sample size of 5000 and also in 9 Hungarian large urban regions with populations exceeding 100 000 people[5]. We compared these results with the social polarisation characteristics revealed in the 11 Hungarian new town regions. This has an outstanding importance as we had the opportunity to identify the differences and similarities between the social circumstances of new towns and large cities based on fresh data, and on the basis of these data we could also define the spatial characteristics of new towns and large urban regions and by proceeding from these regional (i.e. new towns or large urban regions) circumstances we could map the differentiated impact of social structural determinants as well.

We considered it essential to analyse the differences and similarities of Hungarian new towns compared to their old (traditionally developed) counterparts of similar size and geographical position, as well as to make a comparative analysis between Hungarian new towns and all other Hungarian cities. Another new element of our research agenda was to present the architectural characteristics and urban structural endowments of new towns.

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[4] The research conducted in 2005 was implemented under the project "Urban Areas, Spatial Social Inequalities and Conflicts – The Spatial Social Factors of European Competitiveness" with the co-funding of National Research and Development Programmes (Project Reference Number: 5/083/2004).The research was led by Viktória Szirmai.

[5] The 2014 research, "Social Conflicts – Social Well-being and Security – Competitiveness and Social Development" was implemented under the project with reference number: TÁMOP 4.2.2. A-11/1 / CONV-2012-0069 ID. The research was led by Viktória Szirmai.

Compared to the previous project, this book features studies on East-Central European level as a completely new factor, although our financial resources did not make it possible for us to conduct a full empirical survey on the polarisation conditions of East-Central European new towns. Therefore the study focused on the analysis of Polish[6] and Slovak new towns (based on in-depth interviews summarised in case studies) and on the historic analysis of spatial processes in Poland and Slovakia. Due to financial constraints, a comparison of the conditions of new towns in the three countries was not a priority, nevertheless, we attempted to perform this task based on social statistical data and on the major trends that emerged in the analytical studies.

## The structure of this book

In the first major part after the preface (Part 1) we clarify some theoretical issues. As an introduction we present European new towns in the 21st century. Here the main issues will be revealed and a basic question here is whether the new towns' development model is still timely today and what relevance new town theories and development models have today *(by Szirmai)*. The second chapter summarises the urbanist doctrines and theories that underlie "socialist" new town developments and describes dominant social and ideological mechanisms. The third part of the theoretical background summarises the historical changes of the social spatial structure and the impacts of transition and globalisation on the social polarisation mechanisms of Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. *(by Szirmai, Węcławowicz, and Gajdoš)*

Part 2 contains the case studies made in the three countries and gives a description of social spatial polarisation processes. We mainly present Hungarian case studies: the results of in-depth interviews and social statistics in the Tatabánya region *(by Schuchmann)*, the Dunaújváros region *(by Baranyai)*, the Komló

[6] The selection of the Polish research site was motivated by the existing results of previous researches: as a part of an international comparative research led by Nicole Haumont I myself took part in the research of Polish new cities, including the examination of Nowe Tychy *(Haumont et al, 1999)*.

region *(by Halász)* and finally the Kazincbarcika region *(by Berki)*. This is followed by the case of Tychy in Poland *(by Węcławowicz, Hajda)* and a Slovakian case study about the Nová Dubnica region *(by Gajdoš, Moravanská)*.

In Part 3 this will be followed by comparative analyses of new towns and other types of towns based on various criteria: Hungarian new towns compared to large urban regions *(by Csizmady, Ferencz),* new towns compared to all Hungarian cities *(by Rechnitzer, Berkes, Páthy),* new towns compared to old towns *(by Csizmady)* and finally we present the similarities and differences between the architectural characteristics of Hungarian, Polish and Slovak new towns *(by Kissfazekas)*.

In the final Part 4 we summarise our conclusions. Here we attempt to answer the original question of what new town societies mean today, and finally, we evaluate whether we can regard this unique city type as the possibility of a new urban development model or as an unfulfilled promise.

## Acknowledgements

I kindly recommend this book to the inhabitants of new and old towns, to the planners of new and old towns and their regions, to local authorities, to the professionals, intellectuals, entrepreneurs, NGO representatives in the surveyed settlements, to university students interested in regional processes and to my students as well. But most of all I would like to recommend it to the inhabitants of the Hungarian, Polish and Slovakian new town regions as well. Without them this work would never have been born. Therefore, the first thanks are for them actually. I would like to thank them for being at our disposal for telling us their opinions that helped broaden us in our research.

The support of the National Scientific Research Fund was crucial for the current exploration of the problems of new towns and for an objective and independent from any organisational interests analysis of facts. I highly appreciate it on behalf of all my colleagues as well.

I also thank the authors, including my close colleagues and my team (among them, especially Márton Berki and Levente Halász) for their dedicated work. But I am especially grateful to the

Polish and Slovak colleagues who agreed to participate in this work, which was far from easy because of the distances. However, we solved it on the basis of mutual interest and commitment to science.

The support of the Social Science Research Centre of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the translation, the linguistic proof reading as well as the preparation of the book for printing, the high quality appearance and cover design, along with the kind recommendation by Professor Pierre Merlin are also standing behind the results. They are also acknowledged.

**Viktória Szirmai**
*Head of research project and the editor of book*

# PART I.

# THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

# European New Towns in the 21st Century: An Introduction

Viktória Szirmai

## The issues

Industrial cities stagnating or vegetating in the shadow of big cities, steel mills, mines, factories closing down, recently laid off workers protesting in the streets, high unemployment, hopelessness, people moving away from cities, dwindling population, and once thriving cities turning into ghost towns – we can see these and similar images in thematic 1990s English films, such as Peter Cattaneo's "The Full Monty" (1997) or Mark Herman's "Brassed Off" (1996) which are somewhat grotesque and humorous but generally sad. There are also Hungarian examples, a very remarkable one among them is Tamás Almási's 1998 documentary titled "Tehetetlenül" (Helpless), which presents the decay of the metallurgical plant which provided the livelihood of Ózd, a typical Hungarian "socialist" industrial town and the hopeless situation of its employees.

These movies are merely mentioned as illustrations of an era, and do not serve as a framework for the analysis, although the situations they show are depicted accurately. We have to evoke the atmosphere of these films to make a contrast between the problems of a new town development era which they depict and the formation periods when the concepts of the underlying urbanistic doctrines, along with designers and decision-makers were promising hopes of a happy new life and community.

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In their planning phase these cities not only received special attention and development opportunities but also specific missions: in the drafts of their first designers, such as Ebenezer Howard, Le Corbusier, Soviet constructivists, or the CIAM group[1] the development goals of new towns were presented as spatial solutions to the social problems, tensions and poverty typical in the urban explosion period. Social, economic and spatial formation missions associated with the planning of new towns received objectified forms, as after World War II many new towns were built in Europe as well as in Scandinavia and the United States of America.

Meanwhile it is clear that urbanisation theories would never have materialised if social needs had not arisen after World War II that required new town development. Among them were the interests of the central government, which hoped to shape the spatial development of the economy and to tackle some social tensions (including the mass housing shortage) and even shape the way of life through the building of new towns.

With their new town development programmes Western European governments essentially sought to control rapid urban development that met the needs of extensive economic development, to manage the spatial distribution of their populations, to reduce housing shortages, to treat specific social conflicts, and to meet the housing and employment needs of the middle-class wishing to escape from the problems of large cities.

The central powers of Eastern and Central European countries also saw opportunities in the development of new towns, namely ways of gaining power through political, ideological and social influence. After World War II new town planning strategies were formulated as a means of introducing the so-called socialist urbanisation model, which is completely different from the spatial development that took place in the western world. Meanwhile, these strategies essentially served industrial development objectives and political power interests. In the early fifties forced heavy industry development programmes were advocated in order to achieve a socialist type of simple accumulation of capital.

[1] CIAM=Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne

Through stressing rapidly paced development they wanted to catch up with the economic level of developed Western European societies. Disrupting civilian towns and creating the habitations of the new socialist working class were also important objectives. The new town programmes also played ideological roles as the newly formed settlements aspired to become prototypes of the socialist-type social system, community spirit and lifestyle.

## *Signs of failure*

In Western Europe the dynamism of building new towns broke in the late 1970s and the 1980s. The economic crises in the 1970s and the processes that followed them slowed down the development of urban economies. Lessened business interest in new settlements, the dwindling of anticipated new job opportunities, and new demographic waves all contributed to the decrease in the population of new towns. The shaping of lifestyles and the development of community relations turned out to be a failure, as well as the regulation of the development of metropolitan regions. For instance, satellite-type new towns around London even if they sought to slow down the migration into the capital city but could not stabilise the population of the London region: while the agglomeration's population grew almost by 2 million during the course of about 20 years, they only managed to house a little more than one sixth of this figure *(Merlin, 1972)*. This was because the plan did not bear in mind the trend of suburbanisation: many people migrated from London to satellite towns, thereby lowering the chances of other people settling there. Meanwhile, the tertiary sector in London underwent an accelerated development which also pulled people towards the capital.

The new settlements failed to provide the isolated but comfortable suburban existence dreamed up by Howard which would have given them a well-rounded but still local way of life. As in contrast to the original plans, many people were commuting from these satellite towns to the centre (resulting from the needs of the tertiary sector) and on weekends these suburban areas saw an outflow of residents from the centre making them crowded and noisy *(Castells, 1972)*. The new towns created around Paris also proved to be a disappointment: although they did not aspire to create a singular place for habitation and work as envisioned by

Howard, they were still hoped to create an active local community life. However, this did not succeed under the circumstances of modern commuting. New town residents who worked mostly in the capital also had their other everyday activities bound to the capital, so during the day new towns were empty and deserted. Regional and territorial development agencies in Western Europe therefore were on the opinion that new towns cannot efficiently handle spatial processes and they are unfit for shaping everyday life and community and social relationships.

The changing relationship between Western European states and local powers also played a role in downgrading the significance of new settlements. Due to the intensifying crisis of welfare states since the early 1970s, regional development by the state was weakened and gradually receded from local levels. Among other causes this was due to the pressure by civil society, local social movements and strengthened local area development efforts. The regional development resources and subsidisation that stronger settlements applied for and received from the state were different from the previous ones and were less favourable to new towns and more favourable to larger cities.

In the 1970s and 1980s new towns in Central and Eastern Europe were also labelled as a failure, partly due to factors similar to those experienced in western models. The relationships between the central party-state and local powers also changed in communist countries: in the 1950s centralised regional governance was typical, with central powers being exclusively in charge of planning and development. Planning and development characteristics and planning decisions were made in the state's internal negotiation processes, independently of residents, stakeholder social groups and the public *(Ekler–Hegedüs–Tosics, 1980)*. In the 1970s planning and development decisions became partially decentralised as the economically strengthened big cities came

[2] The New Economic Mechanism was a comprehensive reform of the economic governance and planning, which was prepared in Hungary in the mid-1960s, and was introduced on 1 January 1968. The reform has brought major changes in three areas: 1) it reduced the role of central planning and increased corporate autonomy in production and investment; 2) it liberalized prices, i.e. the officially fixed prices of certain products could be changed according to market demand; 3) a centrally defined wage system has been replaced by a flexible company regulation system within certain limits.

into stronger political bargaining positions against the party-state and demanded bigger than usual development resources, at the expense of new industrial towns. For instance, in Hungary this happened as a result of the 1968 New Economic Mechanism[2] and thanks to reforms it gave some room for market processes. To legitimise the changes in the sharing of public resources, it became necessary to phrase the failure of new towns and to disseminate views stating the fall of earlier development goals.

Due to the crises of communist regimes steadily intensifying since 1980 new towns increasingly lost their ideological appeal and utopian dreams formulated at the time of their constructions shattered. At that time the regime intentionally planted the hope of a better life in these towns, promising happiness and a more communal life, with the new towns having jobs, homes, nurseries, kindergartens, schools and adequate healthcare services. Although most of the latter facilities were in fact available there, especially when compared to other settlements and towns and villages of similar size that were struggling with developmental disadvantages, people living in new towns still increasingly felt not only the deterioration of living conditions but also the deepening of social differences that were hitherto officially kept secret[3]. The citizens of new towns felt the decrease of their towns' economic power. Similarly to the whole communist economic system, new urban economies increasingly struggled with foreign debt, the gradual loss of eastern markets, loss-making production, the results of the crisis caused by the outdated product and price structure, the structural problems of the expensive yet inefficient economy, the erosion of large enterprises and their engineering

[3] Once in the past, during a research project of Dunaújváros, a town in Hungary, the locals told the researchers that urban social life is full of inequalities, there are several social contradictions among the members of working-class who are uniformly treated both by the central and local politics. They also said that the homogenous assumed working class is very much structured because the skilled workers' and semi-skilled workers' or unskilled workers' living conditions, wages, incomes and housing conditions varied widely. It was also mentioned that women were in particularly disadvantaged situation especially in comparison to male qualified workers in almost every respect. (That's why at that time Dunaújváros was referred to as "men's town" *(Szirmai–Zelenay, 1983)*. Social cohesion was poor there too, the intellectual groups, including human professionals were excluded not only from local power, but from local social public life as well.

and technical problems. It became clear for the leaders of new towns that despite the benefits of long decades of development, they cannot continue to operate their towns, nor renew them. They had to face the increasing scarcity of resources necessary for renewing or even just stabilising the economy needed for the towns' operation.

The regime changes of Central and Eastern Europe in 1989 and 1990 did not promise positive changes in new towns either; among other things, because even in the first half of the 1990s, it seemed that transitioning to a market-based society will be harder in Eastern and Central European new towns than in traditional cities. Mostly this was due to the fact that the characteristics of the re-distributive urban management model typical of state socialism not only prevailed more clearly and forcefully than in other settlement types but also because certain factors still persisted during the formative years of the new, market-based society, namely the presence of the state and central financial dependencies, and these factors continued to influence the economic and social relationships of cities. This can be explained by the coincidence of certain interests of the state, corporates and employees. In the early 1990s the energy, chemical and steel industries were of strategic importance to the state so privatising them was not a goal. Instead, slow privatisation seemed to be a good solution. The mono-functional economic structure of new towns based on heavy industry proved inflexible and the presence and interests of large enterprises delayed the formation of a diversified economic structure, the development of private capital-based entrepreneurial economies and the consolidation of the service sector alongside the industrial sector.

Among the reasons for slow transformation were the belated development of the middle-class, the lack of civil society traditions, the low number of local social organisations which were also weak in power, and the fact that most existing ones were created in a "top-down" manner (by public institutions, social organisations or large companies) and not by the needs of local social powers. The numerous natural environmental issues created by the heavy industry based economy of new towns were also a serious problem. The accumulation of economic, social and environmental problems led to intense social conflicts in many new towns *(Szirmai, 1993)*, with even more new conflicts on the horizon.

After the social, economic and political transition in 1989 the municipal governments of new towns tried to diversify the economies of their towns and to establish new trade, banking, tourism, and service functions. However, both foreign and local capital as well as tertiary and quaternary functions were more attracted to metropolises with wide-ranging international connections and regions with developed infrastructure and highly skilled workforces. The broadening of urban functions would have required greater local economic strength, more enterprises and a solvent customer base. Ecological problems also hampered the development of new economic functions and the establishing of new industrial investments.[4] The establishment of new roles would also have required greater regional cooperation – unified lobbying by the state – between regional centres and surrounding communities. Horizontal cooperation among municipalities was less developed in the redistributive structure. New towns seemed to find it more difficult to establish connections with their surroundings than old towns which had been more dependent on each other due to their disadvantaged position in the local and social governance system of state socialism.

## *Signs of renewal*

The researches in the first half of the 1990s gave more differentiated answers than was expected from predictions. Professional pessimism did not always come true and the forecasted fall of new towns did not come true in all cases. The results of an international research on new towns have verified this. In 1993 French, English, Polish and Hungarian researchers decided to launch a comparative research titled "Villes nouvelles et villes traditionelles. Une comparaison internationale" (New Towns and Traditional

[4] For example, Dunaújváros failed to convince the Japanese car manufacturer Suzuki to build its Hungarian branch there as the air pollution caused by the town's steel manufacturing led them to choose Esztergom, an old town. According to the local citizens of Dunaújváros, a contributing factor was the new town's unfavourable lobbying position against both the state and larger capital investors. Although this seems a realistic cause, it is more likely that during state and other negotiation processes, the interest enforcement power of groups interested in broadening the town's roles were weaker than of those interested in the exclusivity of old roles.

Towns: An International Comparison) to analyse and comprehensively assess the social, planning and ecological problems of Western and Eastern European new towns. In this comprehensive assessment they aspired to study state (and in western countries, also market) interventions that were implemented through the new town development strategies of previous decades, to summarise conflicts and results, to explore the action mechanisms of local planning, and also to study the urban planning opportunities and limits of various social actors (such as local governments, economic actors, civil organisations and citizen groups). Through this they planned to establish a more coordinated model supported by a state and local planning and development system able to intervene in urban development processes. In all countries studied they also compared new towns with old towns as a control group *(Szirmai, 1996; Haumont et al, 1999).*

This international research basically presented the success of Western European new towns: in the case of English and French towns successes were reported mostly in the field of regional development. The research also pointed out an increase in similarities between the social, structural and spatial characteristics of traditional and new towns. The studies investigating the social structure of French and English new towns found that social structural inequalities had eased since the residents of new towns around metropolises were mostly the members of young, educated and affluent middle-class *(e.g. Haumont et al, 1999; Uzzolli–Baji, 2013).* Although to varying degrees, new towns in the Ile-de-France region of Paris mostly accommodate upper and middle-classes, (which are especially highly present in Marne La-Vallée, a "showcase" new town) *(Brevet, 2011).*[5] New towns are not a new space of spatial and social segregation as the presence of high-status, young families has always been typical in these towns. In the new towns around Paris the tendency of segregation has even increased in recent years *(Herve–Baron, 2009).* This suggests that

[5] The social structure of French metropolises, including new towns around Paris, is not similar to that of metropolises' outer zones, suburbs and large housing estates. These are urban zones and societies where second and third-generation descendants of immigrants live, who are, similarly to their predecessors, unskilled and uneducated, and mostly unemployed. *(for details, see Szirmai, 2011, pp. 31-32.)*

Western European new towns have always provided living spaces for certain middle-class groups, namely young families with children. They provided a place for them to escape from the often annoying multicultural and lower status inner city environment to better suburbs.

The studied Eastern and Central European (Hungarian and Polish) cases also verified the converging trends; similarly to historic towns segregation in new towns has become perceptible: higher social status groups were located in ecologically more favourable urban quarters with better conditions while lower social status groups were located in less favourable ones. The social demographic composition in the two town types has also become similar; the process of ageing, the decreasing proportion of physical workers in the cities in question have both become typical features *(Szirmai, 1998; Haumont et al, 1999)*.

Another important lesson of the international research is that the transformation of new cities in Eastern and Central Europe was regionally differentiated; more developed regions in general more successfully handled their crisis, more successfully adapted to market-based social conditions than industrial towns under disadvantaged regional conditions, economic restructuring took place with greater difficulty there. Furthermore, it became clear that a key factor in the successful transition was the presence of state in some form. Experience has shown that especially those new cities, urban areas have survived successfully, where the state's role at the beginning of the transition and the first half of the 1990s[6] still prevailed, either by conducting the privatisation process, thus underpinning the privatisation process with government regulations and rules shaping or even by ordaining persistently high ratio of assets to remain in state-ownership in the case of privatised large state-owned enterprises or by determining other technical conditions and regulating employment.

[6] For example, in Dunaújváros the presence of state property was maintained at Dunaferr Share Company until 2002. The town of Komló also managed to agree with the government that its mines of vital importance should not immediately shut down as a part of shock therapy, but from 1990 to 2000 they would gradually be closed, the auxiliary industries should be gradually reduced, so that the town could avoid a crash situation which had happened in the town of Ózd.

## Relevancy of the new towns' development model

As a result of abandoning earlier criticisms a number of development objectives and development strategies of new towns are becoming popular again in developed and developing countries. Today in many places urban development efforts by the instruments of social planning, including the establishment of new settlements intend to intervene in the spatial social processes. For example, the modern versions of English new town development models are created in Asia, China, Hong Kong, where the building and development of new towns are key instruments of planning. In these cases, the spatial social processes of large metropolitan areas, especially the location of population living in high-density areas, are intended to be formulated by the further development of peripheral first generation new towns built in the previous periods, on the basis of their good transport connections and adequate infrastructure[7].

Another good example may be an initiative of the French new towns today. Some of the leaders of new towns realised that they can use the social, residential needs arisen in connection with the "étalement l'urbain" (the French term for urban sprawl) processes. Although formerly they were against it but now they have realised that they themselves may be the "engines" of urban expansion, not only by ensuring new areas for moving out to the suburban zone and at the same time controlling it, but also by offering appropriate transport connections and maintaining and even widening urban service functions *(Duheim et al, 2000, p. 71.)*. The success of the initiative is demonstrated by the results of French urban sociological researches, according to which middle-classes wishing to live in private family houses have moved out or built their house not only in traditional small town or village type settlements or newly built gated communities located around

[7] For example, the 9 new towns, built on Hong Kong Island, had several development phases: the first new towns were developed in the early 1970s, the second generation in the late 1970s, the third generation in the 1980s and in the 1990s. Increasing the number of population is still a target. Today 3.5 million people live in these settlements. Since 1966 five new cities have been built in the Seoul metropolitan area, a further development is an objective here as well. http://www.gov.hk/en/about/abouthk/factsheets/docs/towns&urban_developments.pdf)

large urban centres but they have also moved out into the surroundings of new towns *(Brevet, 2011)*. These new towns thus found their new function in the current urbanisation trends, acknowledged the recently emerged social needs, and with the support of the small suburban hubs organised around new towns they have ensured the city centre's' long-term sustainability as well while once again they influence the spatial coverage of the population as well.

There are further examples for the renewal of new towns: as it was said on an international conference organised by the International New Town Institute in 2010. New towns or in other words planned cities around the world are in change; i.e. they are turning into unplanned, renewed, modernised, and receiving such an urban and social outlook which is adapting to their citizens' needs. This process is taking place thanks to the residents', professionals' and users' residential developments, to the shaping of a milieu differing from the built environment of the past *(Provoost, 2010)*. We can find precedents for such phenomena in the eastern and central European environment as well, since the new city districts built after 1990 are no longer planned in the classical sense but organised in compliance with local social and individual needs and embodying them.

Thus, in today's Europe (but as we can see, elsewhere as well) the idea of new town is reviving: previous criticisms are revalued and referred to as "utopias that have become reality" and pertinent scientific conferences are organised[8]. A growing number of Western European experts accept that new town developments are effective instruments for central planning interventions. In addition to this, scientific studies and books highlighting the benefits of the new town environment and lifestyle are published more and more frequently. *(e.g. Haumont et al, 1999; Gaborit, 2010; Provoost, 2010; Brevet, 2011)*.

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[8] The examples for the conferences are as follows: Colloque du 22 mai 2003, "Les villes nouvelles de l'Ile-de-France, une utopie devenue réalité", and Colloque: 20 ans de Transformations Economiques et Sociales au Val d'Europe, Val d'Europe – 18 et 19 décembre 2012.
"New Towns in Ile-de-France, an Utopia Became Reality" 22 May, 2003 and a Conference held in Val d'Europe on 18-19 December, 2012 celebrating the 20 years' anniversary of socio-Economic Transformations in Val d'Europe.

Probably several key factors (varying per country) can be found behind the revival process, but one of them is definitely the state's recurring intensifying attempts to intervene again, especially in order to mitigate the contemporary tensions as an outcome of the 2007 and 2008 global economic crisis on the basis of a controlled stimulation of world economy. The aim of managing demographic processes also plays a role essentially in developing countries (including Eastern and South-East Asian); the primary goal there is the central control of the spatial location of certain social strata of the population[9].

In Western Europe, a specific target is detected, namely the purpose of providing a residential milieu for the members of the upper middle-class (mostly families with high income) wishing to escape from urban social problems. This milieu is supposed to offer favourable architectural features and infrastructure facilities, the proximity to big cities, but at the same time rustic, nature-close environment, and a homogeneous social structure segregated by certain sections of the middle-class.

## *The position of new towns in East-Central Europe today*

Actually, in the East-Central European countries there is no significant interest towards the new town development model or towards the present situations and the changing processes, nor is the future of the new town phenomena present in public policies and future territorial development concepts, or scientific life.

To explore the reasons for this, detailed analyses are necessary. After all, neither the past, nor the present, but not even the future of the new towns can be interpreted without examining the overall territorial and social mechanisms: the conditions of their forma-

[9] Although the number of the world's population growth rate is expected to decrease as it is shown in the following quote: "The World history can be divided into three periods of distinct trends in population growth. The first period (pre-modernity) was a very long age of very slow population growth. The second period, beginning with the onset of modernity (with rising standards of living and improving health) and lasting until 1962, had an increasing rate of growth. Now that period is over, and the third part of the story has begun: the population growth rate is falling and will continue to fall, leading to an end of growth before the end of this century. ('World Population Growth' (2015) Published online at OurWorldInData.org. Retrieved from: http://ourworldindata.org/data/population-growth-vital-statistics/world-population-growth/

tion, the failures and the renewals have been determined by the contemporary economic, territorial and social processes, and as we have seen by power and ideological considerations.

The first period of the new town developments, the period of recovery was mobilised by the first period of urbanisation, the population and urban explosion, the resulting social tensions and by the characteristics and changes of the underlying economic forces.

The later new town developments were induced by the urbanisation cycle which was based on the decentralised location of the economy and population. This urbanisation stage has been completed by now, and now concentrated regional mechanisms are being formed again. By György Enyedi's interpretation these concentration processes can be explained by the unfolding of the latest cycle of urbanisation the so-called global urbanisation. In his view, the global urbanisation process expresses the global economic process of today's world, the full unfolding of the world's capitalist system that involves the rapid growth of population and the strengthening of metropolitan areas *(Enyedi, 2011, pp. 55-60.)*.

Today's urban development is not only concentration, but also decentralisation. The socially differentiated forms of the residents' outmigration from big cities, their different spatial directions, the new spatial demands of the economy and urban sprawl result in a process where big cities are expanding their territorial boundaries integrating satellite towns and other settlements into the given space. The middle-classes rejecting the metropolitan milieu are longing for a better living environment, which will result in the growth or the population exchange of suburbs or even of some new towns. The development of the inner districts of large cities, rehabilitation interventions, and the resulting high real estate prices are laying down the foundations of social exclusion and a low social status suburbanisation model.

Meanwhile, a strong exchange of urban social structure is also taking place: due to the central roles inner city zones are playing in global economy, because of rehabilitation processes, and also because of the leading elite's demands for leading an ultra-urban lifestyle *(Sassen, 1991)* in European capitals and large cities; the gentrification processes, the metropolitan concentration of elite teams and high social status groups and of wealth at the same time are vigorously accelerating *(Savitch–Kántor, 2004)*. On the other hand, lower social status groups are crowded out to the

metropolitan region's peripheral areas, or they are excluded outside the city gate or they are even moving back into their former rural residences.

The characteristics of geographical location cannot be separated from social structural features. Although the presentation of the features of the social structure are beyond the scope of this book's task, so much so longs here that during the last 10 years in Eastern European countries, radical structural changes, intensifying polarisation can be observed that have resulted in a significant decrease in the number and proportion of people belonging to higher social classes and at the same time the falling behind process of middle-class rapidly accelerated, while the proportion of poor people has increased. This is also a problem, as the Eastern and Central European middle-class was neither historically too large: since the communist regimes homogenized their societies by oppressing the old bourgeois class and by excluding them from their countries and sending them to the periphery. This social class is still not large and what is more, weak: the regime change of the 1990s, the reallocations taking place within its context, the 2007, the 2008 world economic crisis and the currency crisis have squeezed these societies and even their middle-classes. That is why up to now a broad middle-class that should have a key role in modernisation has not been born yet.

Social polarisation is reflected in the country's territorial division as well, namely in the social gap between the dwellings of capital city metropolitan and small urban and rural areas. According to this pattern, members of the upper classes, including the typically highly-educated people live in metropolitan and urban dwellings. The lower classes of society are concentrated in the residential areas of small towns, including new towns and of rural villages.

In Eastern and Central Europe (as well as in Western Europe), people of the highest social position, the elite and the most educated, high-income groups of the middle-class live in large cities and their more favourable suburban zones. In Western European new towns one can also find members of the middle-class (although their status is lower). In the new towns of Eastern Europe the social milieu is different, not only the middle-class, but also the members of the skilled working class are present in low proportion. As members of the (skilled, higher-income) middle-

class who formerly lived there fled to larger cities, and the capital city or to the region's more fashionable parts capable of providing work and residence. Today there are several post-socialist new towns inhabited rather by the members of the lower middle-class or very often their impoverished social strata.

All these are essential criteria of the current era when the world-wide global impacts generate almost completely new typed strongly polarised regions which differ from the previous ones in many aspects; the dichotomies between urban and rural areas, sharp social polarisation between different city types, including new towns. This means the spatial manifestations of inequalities regarding skills, knowledge, and particularly wealth and income positions *(Stiglitz, 2012; Piketty, 2014)*.

### *The societies of new towns: the possibility of a new urban development model or an unfulfilled promise?*

Today new towns are no longer built in Eastern and Central Europe. And this statement is true even if new urban quarters have been built in several places due to the establishment of the conditions of market economy and society based on the effects of the transition in the 1990s and as a result of the development and planning activities of the region's new players. As a consequence of global urbanisation trends, including urban sprawl, suburban settlements are transformed and get a new modern architectural face: they reflect the new residential needs of citizens moving out to the suburbs, and to the metropolitan areas of large cities. It is obvious that these new formats are not identical with the phenomena of new towns interpreted in the classic sense. The same is true in the case of the mass of former villages freshly declared as towns.

All this raises the following question: can we and do we have to deal with the already implemented, so-called new towns in a scientific sense? We are sure that the answer is yes. Namely because of the evolution of the above described social polarisation phenomena, namely because of the formation of two different but at the same time comprehensive social spatial inequality mechanisms. One type of inequality exists between the Eastern and Central European new towns. The other type of inequality arises from the comparison of urban societies of the new towns of

Eastern and Central Europe and Western Europe. This latter is particularly dangerous. In the above parts one could see that Western European new towns are mostly inhabited by the middle-class. However, in Eastern and Central Europe, new towns (it should be added again that in differentiated aspects) are inhabited not by the middle-class but rather by lower status groups which in several cases belong to the underclass.

Both are cases of segregation but while one – due to the possession of favourable earnings and other economic benefits – is organised voluntarily by the inhabitants' own choices, the other is organised by constraints, the lack of favourable income and other economic or even market advantages. These inequalities cause a major concern, as they are spoiling Eastern and Central European competitiveness and the social and economic regeneration of the individual countries. Moreover, they make the easing of tension arising from polarising social inequalities between the different European countries difficult as well. Therefore, the investigation of Eastern and Central European new towns and the presentation of facts is an important task for regional science and sociology.

The central question of this book is that whether the development of new towns was the possibility of a new urban development model or an unfulfilled promise. Moreover, whether a special town type, different from any other town types, was created in the case of new towns in Eastern and Central Europe, including Hungary. We want to answer this central question not by the method based on going back to historical traditions. The original town plans and urban planning doctrines have never been realised, they were always compromised partly due to momentary political interests, and partly to short-term economic, mainly cost-saving aspects. What's more, the built new Eastern and Central European new towns have never offered the establishment of the conditions of the community life envisioned in the plans but even if they had offered it, it could not have been a real success because without the transformation of social structures the social community-forming power of physical life conditions is weak and limited.

This book describes the current trends, today's new town types and other urban models with their differences and similarities. Our aim is to find the still existing relevancies of the new towns' character, to reveal what the new towns of Eastern and Central

Europe are like today, whether they offer something else, something unique compared to other spatial formations, something that may explain why many people like, can and want to live in them and this could serve as a basis for building the future. The modernisation of the specific features of new towns, the preservation of architectural and historical values, and the development of urban societies by treating polarisation inequalities may provide the so far mostly losers of the 1990 transition with new life opportunities.

# "Socialist" New Towns' Development: the Formation Period

Viktória Szirmai

## Determining urbanistic doctrines

With the new town construction wave following World War II, not only town types lacking historical traditions and spontaneous, organic development spread around Europe (and other parts of the world), but spatial and social formations striving for the regulation of social life, for the management of social conflicts that are well-balanced and capable of eliminating social inequalities and promising well-being for their local community also emerged.

There may be different periods, different manifestations or even different forms and characteristics of building new towns (including for example the new towns and satellite towns), they are mostly planned for different aspects and purposes in various countries. This is the reason why the concept of new towns is not easy to specify, as it can be defined according to several criteria[1]. Among the many criteria history and genesis are the most important 'which appeared in a certain site practically "at a bare place" in

The study has been realised within the confines of the research entitled "Social Polarisation in the Hungarian and Eastern-Central European 'New Town' Regions: Impacts of Transition and Globalisation" (K 106169), funded by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office.

[1] New towns must be differentiated from the administratively declared new towns which can be defined on the basis of functional capabilities, regional central roles and the number of population. Although new towns have such characteristics as well because their formation is associated with administrative decisions that are mostly state decisions. What is important here is that this concept is dynamically changing. These towns are characterised by slow changes. It is important for them to have good urban infrastructure which ensures the well-being of the population. Demographic criteria (young population of childbearing age) are also among the major determinants. Although this

accordance with the specially elaborated new urbanistic and architectural concept, or at least with a new general plan.' *(Szymanska, 2005, p. 2.)*.

The introduction of the European new towns developments are really inseparable from the urban doctrines seeking town planning solutions for spatial-social problems, for the negative phenomena of urban sprawl, for urban poverty and overcrowding in the late 18th and the early 20th centuries, and finding them in the building of new towns. It was Ebenezer Howard, an English architect, who first proposed the introduction of new urban forms, the creation of new suburbs for the remedy of metropolitan social problems *(Howard, 1898)*. Howard's idea aspiring for connecting the urban with the rural style of life was not only promoting the planning of suburban forms but the effects of Howardian doctrine can also be perceived behind the most diverse types of new towns.

The term of new industrial town was first used by Tony Garnier, a French architect, in the early 20th century who for the treatment of industrial production related social problems planned modern, new industrial towns *(Garnier, 1914; Meggyesi, 1985)*. Le Corbusier and his staff devoted to modern architecture represent the idea that interfering in social relationships should be done with the creation of new towns in the most mature form. They replaced old towns neither by garden towns, nor by small towns, but rather by highly populated, densely built centres with rich community life opportunities, lively centres, garden towns, villa neighbourhoods around the town centre to ensure separation *(Le Corbusier, 1966)*.

The dialogue between the Soviet constructivists and the leading architects of the CIAM group during the twenties was not only of the era's most exciting – and in its effect still controversial – discussion but it also served as a theoretical ideological basis for a new urban form spreading across the territory of the former Soviet Union and Central and Eastern European countries. The building of new dwellings was complemented by such society-shaping

has changed a lot in different developmental periods, in the first period the differences between the ratio of inflowing migrants and the indigenous population was in favour of the former ones. This rate, however, changed during development, and the proportion of the two types of population has become more balanced in the subsequent periods.

efforts that were aimed at intervening in the processes of social lifestyle by the instruments of planning and architecture and which saw the guarantees of creating new socialist life and society in building new towns (new districts). As an influence of the era's urban thinking, and mostly of CIAM, an avant-garde group of Soviet architects, the Constructivists attached crucial importance to urban planning in creating a new social order, especially to the architecture different from the previous ones, based on rationality, on the principle of utility, on the functional order of elements and on the architecture denying the past and oriented for the future *(Gans, 1979; Guinzburg, 1979)*.

Between 1929 and 1931 two trends emerged among the avant-garde architects, one of them was the urbanist, the other was the dezurbanist theory *(Sabsovitch, 1979)*. Both trends were for those decentralised industrial and urban developments that later on were realised by the development of cities built next to industrial areas, and giga-investment projects. There was a significant difference between the representatives of the two groups. The urbanists were for decentralised and regional urban development showing some signs of centralised development with towns of 30-60,000 inhabitants while dezurbanists proposed full decentralisation with homogeneously dispersed individual dwellings instead of towns. Both urbanists and dezurbanists sought for the elimination of differences between town and country, and for the establishment of new settlements different from the cities of capitalist societies, with creating and expressing socialist way of life. Despite the debates they agreed that the establishment of a socialist society can be expected from building an institutional system creating the possibilities of living in community.

The CIAM and the constructivists collectively prepared the so-called Collective House, a new type of residence, which attempts to harmonize individual and collective life; it was planned not only for the world of work but also for spending free time. Sabsovitch, the head of urbanists, imagined future socialist cities as a combination of 15-20 huge adjoining community buildings, inhabited by two or three thousand people *(Sabsovitch, 1979b, p. 234.)*.

In the 1920s and 1930s, all the Central and Eastern European countries were influenced by the modern architectural concepts. Due to the spread of Stalin's policy, the policy of isolation from the Western relations since the late 1930s in the Soviet Union and

from the middle of the 1940s in Eastern and Central European countries the ideas of modern architecture were gradually abandoned. The socialist economies were unable to follow the modern architectural models and the ruling political powers did not want to satisfy the housing needs of societies. The rational nature of new architecture was not spectacular enough for the political powers. In the Soviet Union using the style of the so-called classic socialist realist architecture seeking for monumentalism was promoted, which according to the political concept was thought to raise the enthusiasm of people with greater efficiency. The new towns of the early 1950s in Eastern and Central Europe were built in this slow and expensive style.

## Principal objectives of new towns development

Settlement and urban policies used urban theories propagating the social opportunities of planning and architecture. Party states proclaimed in the 1950s the idea of founding social change through new towns developments with the purpose of political legitimacy. This ideological purpose of creating conflict-free municipalities sometimes was above any other issues. Regional development processes were subordinated to the interests of accelerated industrialisation, and to the development of heavy industry, energy and metallurgy. In the 1950s, only industrial settlements and towns were developed, while traditional towns and villages were declining.

The central powers considered energy and raw material supply as the preconditions of forced industrial development. When selecting the location of new settlements the proximity to raw material resources was an important aspect. In some countries, for example in the former Soviet Union, a significant part of the raw materials was located in remote areas, far from cities, thus in the Asian regions. And as more than three-quarters of the population lived in the European region, and industrial investments were realised in Siberia and Central Asia they founded new cities for the employees there *(Merlin, 1991, p. 92.)*. In Central and Eastern Europe new towns were built mostly next to small villages, small towns, traditionally developed industrial settlements, industrial agglomerations to ensure access to the existing road and transport

network, to maintain contacts with industrial regions, due to the country's regional endowments. The designation of the location of new towns was determined by not only the availability of free labour supply, but also by strategic military considerations.

The number of new towns in the former Soviet Union is more than 1000 with more than 40 million inhabitants; a quarter of the total urban population lives in new towns *(Merlin, 1991, p. 89.)*. In Central Europe much fewer new towns were built (in Poland 24, in Slovakia 4, in Hungary 11 urban settlements are classified as new towns). In Hungary, in 2015 3.2% of the total population was living in new towns, which is 4.6% of the total urban population.[2] Many people claim that the new settlements cannot be named as towns. In the early 1950s new towns were mostly the housing estates of factories with deficient facilities unable to serve the needs of the town and its neighbourhood zone. In the first periods of planning there were even no needs for regional functions, although it is a very important criterion for the town. New towns gradually became regional centres only from the 1960s when the conditions of education, health and trade facilities able to serve town's catchment area were created.

In the mid-1950s new towns were built according to a general plan, based on strategic concept, with a complex approach of town building. In several new towns now these are the best neighbourhoods. The new towns or districts built in later periods by the changing standards of modern industrial construction technology are mostly of inferior quality, due to the quantitative approach of flat construction to the purpose of increasing the density of built-in areas, to the aims of saving the costs of public facilities, to the over-centralisation of institutions and to the monotony of architectural styles.

The first generation of new towns was created in connection with the forced development of heavy industry and was built in the spirit of performing industrial functions. (For example, in Poland Żory, Wodzisław, Głogów, Lubin, Tychy were built for coal mining and processing while Polkowice for copper mining. Tatabánya and Komló in Hungary were examples of mining towns; Dunaújváros, Ózd, and the Polish Stalowa Wola are metallurgical towns.)

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[2] Source: Gazetteer of Hungary, 1st January 2015

From the 1960s onwards modern industries, such as hydrocarbon extraction, and chemical industry became the leading powers of development. (Kędzierzyn, Police in Poland and Kazincbarcika, Tiszaújváros in Hungary are functioning as centres for chemical industry.) Nuclear energy sector also created new towns (Paks in Hungary, Obninsk in the former Soviet Union). In the area of the former Soviet Union new towns were built for scientific research centres (Akademgorod and Novosibirsk in Siberia) *(Merlin, 1991, p. 92.)*. The central powers also wanted to influence the economy, the territorial decentralisation of population, and the urbanisation of urban peripheries. New settlements were built on the surrounding areas of large cities such as new industrial satellite towns around Moscow and St. Petersburg *(Merlin, 1991, p. 92.)*. In connection with the decentralisation of Budapest, the capital of Hungary, the question of building new satellite towns was raised in the 1960s in Hungary as well, but due to the informal conflicts between interests, the fights for resources and the resistance of provincial Hungarian cities this idea was rejected.

The functions and the industrial structure of the new towns of the former socialist countries embodied the demands for centralised power in the 1950s. From the 1970s onwards, industrial roles were less and less influenced by the central government's exclusive criteria, but rather by the new forces of the changed power structure during the reform processes in the meantime; such as the interests of corporate lobbies – which were rather political ideological, standing on the basis of exploiting the legitimacy of the workers' town character than economic. The possibility of enforcing these interests came from the fact that local interests coincided with the central power's political and ideological interests. During the transition period in the 1990s the coincidence of the interests of certain government and specific local power groups in maintaining the existing industrial urban functions was still maintained.

# The Main Characteristics of East-Central European Urbanisation Processes

Viktória Szirmai

## A different or a delayed model?

In connection with the evaluation of the Eastern European model of urbanisation there are various professional opinions and opposing views. The two key arguments are represented by Iván Szelényi *(Szelényi, 1996)* and György Enyedi *(Enyedi, 1996)* in the most explicit way. By Szelényi's opinion: 'the urban development in the socialist epoch in Eastern Europe was quite different from the urban development in Western countries at a similar stage of economic growth' *(Szelényi, 1996, p. 286.)*. In contrast, Enyedi points out that 'the socialist urbanisation (more precisely, the urbanisation of East-Central European countries) was not a new model of modern urbanisation. Rather East-Central European socialist countries replicated stages of a more generally applicable global process of urban development. These countries also exhibited special characteristics at each stage of urbanisation, because of the delayed economic and urban modernisation, and the mechanisms of the socialist political system.'

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*(Enyedi, 1996, p. 102.)* Musil is substantially on similar opinion when he accepts Enyedi's concept, but points out the historical process of differentiation: 'Urbanisation trajectories in socialist countries differed from those in capitalist countries, most notably in the first phase after the socialist takeover. After 10 to 15 years of socialist rule, however, urbanisation trends in Central and Eastern European countries began to converge with those in Western Europe' *(Musil, 2005, p. 40.)*.

The author on the basis of her own empirical experiences, including the exploration of the characteristic features of the society of new towns, agrees with the latter approach. According to this, urbanisation in Central and Eastern Europe is seen as a part of modern global urbanisation, it does not constitute a specific socialist model, except for some early historical periods (for example, the first periods of the development of new towns). Central and Eastern European urbanisation is characterised by the mechanisms determining urbanisation processes in developed Western European countries, and by each country's specific historical features or regional power and political social conditions, according to their semi-peripheral status, and their influences.

The differences from the West-European processes are partly the outcomes of the regional historical heritage, the power of the past *(Hamilton et al, 2005, p. 11; Musterd–Kovács, 2013)*. The history of Central and Eastern European countries both in the 19th and the 20th centuries was characterised with the dependence on various superpowers, the lack of Western-style autonomous urban development, the historically peripheral economic and social situation compared to Western Europe, and as a partial consequence, delayed development, including belated urbanisation *(Węcławowicz, 1992; Enyedi, 1998)*.

An evidence for the delay is that in the researched region industrialisation and urbanisation only began in the 19th century. The Polish, Slovak and Hungarian society for a long time maintained its rural character (an example for that is that in 1950 the proportion of rural population in Poland was 70% and 60% in Hungary. In today's Slovakia, even in 1970 this ratio was still 63%). The Czech society as Central Europe's central region was more urbanised *(Enyedi, 1998; Węcławowicz, 1997)*.

The state socialist system created further differences. These systems were characterised by centralised, one-party-based power

structure, redistributive social management mechanisms, which means reallocation was based on the redistribution of financial resources[1]. In addition to this, the lack of local (corporate, regional) autonomy, exclusive state property, neglected market conditions, the absence of social participation, civil society organisations and movements, and last but not least, 'zigzaggings' between the characteristic features of "soft" and hard "dictatorship, the intimidating presence of the party state perching on individuals' everyday lives, the total lack of the freedom of speech. The social, political, power system mechanisms partly delayed the emergence of global urbanisation and partly dampened the effectiveness of processes as well. These are the reasons why the socialist type of urbanisation model is called delayed.

## The impacts of transition

As a result of the social and political transformation processes of the 1990s, the regime change in the Central and Eastern European countries, then of the European integration, and the effects of globalisation regional and social differences (even in the new towns) steadily declined in Western and Central and Eastern Europe and similarities strengthened. This was namely due to the gradual build-up of the market economy, to privatisation processes, to the evolution of the real estate market, to the inflow of foreign capital, to the emergence of international companies, and in general to the transformation of the urban economy *(Enyedi, 1998)*. Another essential factor of the transformation process was the establishment of local governments, local territorial self-organisation which giving way to local planning and

[1] Max Weber defines two kinds of territorial governance and management by his distinction of autonomous western cities capable for self-advocacy, planning, settlement development against the central power from eastern cities capable neither for independent community advocacy, nor for autonomous management, planning and development against the central power, and local residents are individually subjected to the central authority. (Weber, M. (1947). Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft in Tübingen. Moht, 385.p.) In the case of redistributive allocation, central state authority distracts and centralises the local companies' municipalities' resources and redistributes them according to its own preferred aspects.

development, thanks to the new laws[2] enabling the local-level utilisation of locally generated resources and to the development of non-governmental organisations[3], creating the preconditions of public participation.

The built mostly urban environment was also re-generated: in all major cities: foreign financial institutions appeared in a significant number: banks, modern office buildings, economic and trade centres, large shopping centres were built. Many hotels were renovated or new ones were built: business-market real estate development was a characteristic feature of urban development.

Large urban centres were modernised rapidly by elegant shops, new restaurants and cafes, pedestrian streets, and the transformed public spaces as well. The new towns were not exceptions from this: urban centres were and are renovated, commercial and other services also started to develop, although there are strong differences between cities.

Today inner city quarters, the new architectural solutions reflect the atmosphere of West-European cities. This is due to the fact that the transformation of urban neighbourhoods more strongly depends on the spread of the global economy and from its local effects than on the influence of the national economy. The urban characteristics of large cities, especially in the capital's inner-city parts such as hotels, office buildings, commercial centres, fast food restaurants and entertainment centres are becoming more and more standardised; due to the functional solutions and design serving for the interests of the big multinational trading and service companies. This city-centre structure becoming more homogeneous in its tendencies is mainly serving for the interests of transnational and cosmopolitan elite groups *(Martinotti, 2010, p. 9.)*.

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[2] Later on they changed, for example, because of the financial centralisation introduced in Hungary. In 1990 local personal income tax revenues were entirely collected for the local municipality's budget. In 1992 there was equal sharing between the central government and the local government. In 1993, it was only 30% of tax revenues that remained at the local governments. Since 2013 no personal income tax revenues have remained at local governments.

[3] There were significant differences between countries in civil society organisations: the legal framework and opportunities were not always in line with the actual processes; the lack of resources and the urge for party organisation were generally stronger than movement organisations, due to the absence of civil society bases.

The integration into the network of European cities, the participation of cities in international competition, and, last but not least, the restructuring of urban societies also contributed to the catching up trends. Bourgeois middle-class, the new elite groups, including entrepreneurs, multinational company employees, financial and other advisors having been existing for a long time in Western societies have also appeared (albeit at a much smaller scale) in Central and Eastern European societies, in the new towns even in smaller proportions. The social polarisation, the structural dichotomy between the high and the low social status classes and its territorial imprints, the processes of social segregation, residential segregation, territorial exclusion also followed the western trends, albeit delayed and in different quantity and quality *(Enyedi, 1998, p. 16.)*.

The suburbanisation process was also accelerated in the context of the transition; with the strengthening of the housing and real estate market, with the building of market economy, with the availability of personal cars for masses and last but not least, with the slow but nevertheless starting middle-classification, with the emergence of needs for new residential (including detached house) neighbourhoods.

Central and Eastern European countries are highly urbanised. The proportion of urban population is between 50-74%. The concentration of urban population, economic activity, and global capital in metropolitan areas are also indicating that the development progress is harmonising with the European trends. *(Illés, 2002, p. 74.)*. In accordance with global trends, the regions' major cities, especially capital cities play a key role in economic and social modernisation *(Węcławowicz, 1998, p. 55.)*.

There are internal differences in the concentration of urban population by country size, for example, between larger and smaller countries. The table below shows these internal differences, the concentration of urban population is the highest in Poland in big cities with over 100 thousand population (and the capital). It is followed by the concentration of Hungarian urban population in metropolitan areas (and the capital) and by the Czech urban population in metropolitan areas. The Slovakian data suggest a lower level of concentration.

Table 1: The distribution of urban population by city size in 2011 (total population=100%)

| City size category | Poland | Czech Republic | Hungary | Slovakia |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Below 5 000 | 2.49% | 8.55% | 2.97% | 1.35% |
| 5 000-9 999 | 3.35% | 8.77% | 7.37% | 6.03% |
| 10 000-49 999 | 18.25% | 21.90% | 23.49% | 24.52% |
| 50 000-99 999 | 8.33% | 8.42% | 6.29% | 10.46% |
| Over 100 000 | 28.30% | 22.28% | 27.05% | 12.07% |
| Share of capital city | 4.42% | 12.16% | 15.99% | 7.62% |
| Share of urban population in the country's total population | 60.72% | 69.91% | 67.16% | 54.43% |

*Source: http://www.stat.gov.pl/test/search.jsp, http://www.fat.admin.ch/eaae96/abstracts/s24.pdf KSH Hungarian Statistical Yearbook 2004, www.statistik.sk, www.infostat.sk/vdc/*

There are further differences between the growth paths of Western and the East-Central European cities: due to economic and social suburbanisation, inner-city social problems and urban natural environmental hazards the Western European metropolitan population since the 1970s steadily declined and in the 1980s, the decline was even more significant. However, the 1990s, resulted in re-urbanisation, further concentration processes brought about a new phase of global urbanisation. In this context, the urban population started to grow again.

The growth of Central and Eastern European cities was high in the 1950s and from the 1970s onwards, there was a slight decrease which was very significant in the 1980s *(Jeney, 2002)*. In the early 2000s, a perceivable transformation took place: in the Eastern and Central European big cities (among them in several major cities such as Bratislava, Prague, Berlin, Warsaw, Budapest) population decline stopped, stagnated or even started to grow *(Demographic trends; Jeney, 2005; 2007)*.

At the time of state socialism there was a typical difference between the Western and the Central and Eastern European trends in the development dynamics of city centres and their urban peripheries. The city's surrounding settlements were often rural, with low-population density where a metropolis emerged

like an island. This difference by now has mostly disappeared due to the economic and social suburbanisation processes, although differences still occur according to the regional development level of urban areas.

In Central and Eastern European urban economies, the role of the industry is generally higher than in the Western cases, and the importance of the tertiary sector is lower. Relative deconcentration is a typical phenomenon as well. The simultaneity of several urbanisation processes can also be observed: in addition to suburbanisation and in parallel with it re-urbanisation process is also a characteristic feature: not only is the moving out but also the moving back of middle-class is an existent phenomenon. The reason for this phenomenon, in addition to the suburban infrastructural deficiencies and the unfavourable traffic, commuting conditions, is that European, including Eastern and Central European middle-classes (as opposed to the majority of American middle-classes, for example), are less fond of suburbs, living in downtown districts has always been a value.

## Social-spatial polarisation

It has already turned out from Sassen's analysis that urban networks, cities and their urban areas formulated by the globalising world economy, (and the national societies concerned) have strongly differentiated development opportunities *(Sassen, 1991)*. The researches on Central and Eastern Europe also verified the global impacts of territorial polarisation mechanisms and the spatial inequalities originating not only from global connectivity (and its territorial differences), but also from their historical determinations and their organic nature as well as from their intensifying as a result of social and political transition processes *(Gajdoš, 2008; Precupetu–Precupetu, 2013; Horváth, 2015)*. Researches show that dichotomies in metropolitan and rural economic development, infrastructure endowment are typical, just like the differences between big cities and their urban areas or in other word the inequalities between centres and peripheries. The differentiation deepened between the post-socialist cities of the East and Central European countries, and also between the new towns in each country.

The capital cities' historically determined advantages can be seen in all the countries examined; they have not only been conserved, but have even strongly increased during the last few years *(Muster–Smith, 2013)*. From the analytical case studies from Slovakia the advantage of Bratislava, the capital city, (including the GDP) is clearly visible over the country's other regions, which – among other things – is due to the presence of the Volkswagen Company in the capital city *(Gajdoš, 2005; Gajdoš, 2008)*. The economic situation of Bucharest, the Romanian capital, is also much better than the other, such as the east, the north-eastern and south-eastern regions *(Precupetu–Precupetu, 2013)*. The Hungarian capital's historical and contemporary advantages are obvious: "From 1989 until the middle of the 1990s, Budapest received far more FDI than other towns in the Central European region (except East Berlin)" *(Tosics, 2005, p. 248.)*. The regional distribution of FDI in Hungary shows the significant advantages of the Central Hungary region for many years (see related figure in the next section).

# Social-Spatial Mechanisms and Urban Changes in Hungary

Viktória Szirmai

## Under-urbanisation issues

Due to the slow and prolonged Industrial Revolution, urbanisation in Hungary (as well as in Eastern and Central Europe) was delayed in the context of a basically agrarian society and spatial structure. The first phase of urbanisation took place in the middle of the 19th century, but urban sprawl at that time was limited to Budapest, the country's capital city. The development of modern industry affected only a few mining towns, while market towns and medieval cities either remained immobile or were declining. This regional endowment had an impact on their later regional development as well.

The second phase of global urbanisation, the relative deconcentration was detected in the case of Budapest already in the 19th century; at the beginning of the 20th century the country's capital was surrounded by developed metropolitan agglomeration. The growth of suburbs at that time was faster than that of Budapest. The capital city's growing suburbanisation at the end of the 19th century was an indication of a looser spatial location of the previously more concentrated development of urban population. In the 1960s the agglomeration process intensified around the capital and the major cities. The development of small and medium-sized cities also marked the next phase's entering into force.

The study has been realised within the confines of the research entitled "Social Polarisation in the Hungarian and Eastern-Central European 'New Town' Regions: Impacts of Transition and Globalisation" (K 106169), funded by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office.

According to the communist political regime state ownership and the full state control of spatial processes eliminate spatial-social problems. However, in the 1960s and the 1970s with the villagers' mass migration to cities various deviant phenomena appeared in Hungary as well. Due to the elimination of poor housing, full employment and social policies they emerged in less radical forms than in developed Western countries. Crime was extremely high especially in the new industrial cities: in the 1960s in Dunaújváros and Kazincbarcika and in the 1970s in Tiszaújváros (called Lenin town at that time). Since 1970 in Budapest, in the five major cities, and out of the new towns in Dunaújváros divorce rate remained higher than the national average.

Based on Szelényi's concept there are several significant and important features of urbanisation in Eastern Europe. Among them, the following characteristic is particularly important: "less population growth and less spatial concentration of the population than in market capitalist societies at the same stage of economic development. The socialist societies of Eastern Europe became "under-urbanised" during the extensive socialist industrialisation." *(Szelényi, 1996, p. 287.)* "Under-urbanisation means that the growth of the urban population falls behind the growth of urban industrial and tertiary sector jobs." *(see ibid. p. 295.)* This proved to be true in Hungary as well, because settlement and economic development policies favoured industrial developments and did not increase urban infrastructure sufficiently during the 1960s. Under these circumstances but also because of historically existing backwardness the majority of workers in cities and nearly half of the country's total workers could not get housing in the cities and became commuters.

In Hungary in the 1970s the number of daily commuters out of the entire population was approximately 20%; that is slightly more than one million people. Approximately 300 thousand people commuted with longer intervals. The evaluation of commuting was controversial: according to some views *(see, for example Szelényi, 1996)* working in city and living in village commuters, the so-called peasant-workers faced a highly serious social problem. It was because due to the redistributive mechanisms villagers in their community did not benefit from the surplus products which they themselves produced in the city. Other opinions *(see, e.g. Enyedi, 1996),* however, argued that commuting is a general concomitant

of urbanisation. Its problematic aspects may be solved by improving the cultural and social conditions of rural population and the development of transport services. Moreover, rural commuters create a lot of values in the urban environment as well *(Enyedi, 1996, pp. 115-118.)*.

Commuting is a much more common phenomenon today: since 1990 the rate of commuting has been rising continuously *(Szabó et al, 2014)*. In 2011 3,943 000 people, 35.4% of the employed population commuted, thus compared to the 1970 figures, far more people commute. *(Hardi–Szörényiné, 2014)* The 2011 census data recorded show the highest figures ever (while the number of employees has also increased). The main reason for the increased commuting is the growth of spatial inequalities, the increasing concentration of jobs in cities and towns and hence the higher suction effect of cities on the labour force.

## The historical background of urban and rural inequalities

In the 1950s the socialist accumulation of capital, the requirements of forced industrial development, and the ideological ambitions for catching up with the Western world defined the interest structure of Hungarian regional development: resources were diverted from agriculture and villages and were transferred to the industrial sector, to areas considered important for industrialisation. Not only industrial settlements, especially those built next to new industrial towns but also Budapest was in a privileged situation.

A 1970 government decision brought change by shifting the focus of economic development to large and medium-sized cities with highly favourable conditions and intensive development. According to the government's decision industrial premises equipped with modern technology and demanding highly skilled labour must be located into the centres.

The economic development ideas bringing about some decentralisation economically strengthened larger cities and county centres and even put them into political bargaining position and became independent re-distributive centres. As a result of this, they were able to gain more development funds and planning

options for themselves and they were free to decide on the territorial allocation and utilisation of their infrastructural, housing development resources.

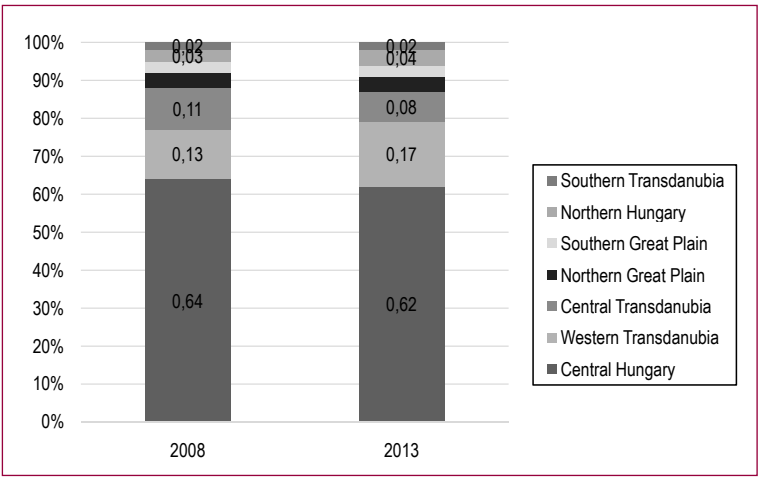
The county centres during the distribution of their funds secured benefits for themselves, and for larger municipalities, cities; 70-80% of the resources available for the development of housing and infrastructure remained at the top of the settlement hierarchy; in county seats and major cities. Only 20-30% of the resources were left for villages. This method of the allocation of development resources further increased territorial inequalities, including social inequalities between cities and villages. Due to the lack of regional employment opportunities and because of the location of public institutions in the cities and the lack of primary provisional services, the qualified younger and more marketable social classes gradually moved to towns and cities from disadvantaged rural regions.

## Deepening urban and rural inequalities

During the 1990s, the Hungarian society and the Hungarian settlements have become part of the global system; the global trends in the world prevail here too, but – due to the country's peripheral historical heritage – with problematic consequences. The territorial demands of global economy polarised the Hungarian territorial social structure in a peculiar way; the positive effects of the transition unfolding in 1990, foreign capital investments and the major international and multinational companies' site selection affected especially the historically-developed regions, such as the Central-Hungarian and West-Hungarian regions, the county seats and the major cities (especially the metropolitan areas of Budapest, Győr, Székesfehérvár). Several areas were left out from the beneficial effects of global processes (mostly the northern and eastern regions of Hungary, the interior zones of the Great Hungarian Plain, industrial cities, small towns, rural areas). The differences in the regional distribution of FDI are still significant regional disparity generating factors *(see Figure 1)*.

Owing to the impacts of the strengthening market economy, the globalisation of the Hungarian economy, the accession to the European Union, and of the enforcement of modern Western European regional and urban development processes major

Figure 1: The regional distribution of FDI in 2008 and in 2013




*Source: Central Statistical Office – the author's own edition*

Hungarian cities have also turned into key actors of the economic, social and political life; their competitiveness has become stronger compared to other places and they successfully resolved the crisis stemming from their pre-transition periods. Now they are the engines of economic development concentrating a significant part of the national economic potential and enterprises that participate more intensively in global economy; employment rate is much higher in these cities than the national average, and so is the ratio of the working population, including the proportion of intellectual workers (mainly in towns), the tax base is higher and there are higher incomes.

During the last decade, the development of the Hungarian metropolitan areas significantly differentiated: in particular, the social and economic disparities between metropolitan and provincial metropolitan areas (although historically they were always existing) strongly deepened. The economic power potentials of the region of Budapest are much better compared to other regions (a significant percentage of foreign investment is concentrated in the region of Budapest), the regional social endowments are also favourable: with higher education and higher income ratio and lower unemployment than the provincial metropolitan areas *(Schuchmann–Váradi, 2015)*. (Similarly to international trends elite social groups were located in the metropolitan areas, although the ratio of

Hungarian elites living in Hungarian major cities and their metropolitan areas is lower than in their international counterparts.)

However, this does not change the basic trend: the most dynamic actors in the current economic and social development are still the metropolitan areas. Because the really problematic spatial units are the peripheral border areas, rural micro-regions, the victims of historically established social and economic closure, excluded not only from today's modernisation, but also from global economic life, furthermore, areas with weak economy suffering from the lack of resources and with strongly diminishing and poor population.

## The social structure of the Hungarian metropolitan areas

The social spatial structure of the metropolitan areas in Hungary was historically formed by the pattern of the high social status core and low social status periphery model. In the period of state socialism this historical inequality model was rearranged as the social prestige of city centres decreased due to the phenomena of the deterioration of cities and to the quasi-suburban development resulting from the construction of new housing estates in inner city quarters and later on in the suburbs.

The centralised (re-distributive distribution system based) urban development and housing policy supported the construction of new housing estates built for the social strata important for the regime; in the first period of construction houses and flats in the new quarters were built primarily for the educated classes and managers. In the next phase of development, residential areas in the cities' peripheral quarters and industrial districts flats and housing estates were mostly built for members of the blue collar working class and people with families. Meanwhile, old quarters were doomed to perish: no money was spent on old historical buildings, they were not renovated, so higher social status classes moved out from there and old-aged people, mostly pensioners with low-income were abandoned. They became vulnerable to the gentrification consequences of the isolated state implemented renovations during the socialist regime and later on to the market-driven rehabilitation interventions.

The gentrification of inner city neighbourhoods became more dynamic, only as a consequence of the social and political changes in the 1990s; downtown 'citification', and the social and economic functional change of the inner districts also contributed to this process. The building of offices, new or refurbished hotels, restaurants and coffee houses, commercial and cultural centre developments, including the renovation of old apartment blocks, also put an end to the deterioration of inner quarters and accelerated the process of downtown "embourgeoisement," or gentrification, using the English equivalent, now as a result of market conditions, private equity, foreign real estate development as well. They not only stopped the deterioration of the internal parts, but kept urban citizens there and even tempted many of the previously relocated former citizens to return back from satellite towns and suburban settlements (especially in the case of Budapest).

Suburbanisation, another phase of global urbanisation, also accelerated and emerged in a pure form in the transition period. Although (as a result of the domestic economic reform processes) already in the 1960s and 1970s suburban and peri-urban private (or condominium) building constructions started through which some of the more skilled and better-off social groups spread from the newly built housing estates out into the green zone; they built their new homes there. This process further intensified during the 1990s, due to the above-mentioned reasons (i.e. because of the development of the housing – and real estate market, the development of market economy, and slow embourgeoisement). Among the members of the middle-class, many were highly motivated to move out to the suburban zone to escape from the inner-city's social and environmental problems, from the slowness of urban regeneration and also because of their desire for suburban lifestyle, for a private house, which idea was based on their (usually newly purchased) car.

In this period, in the developed European countries, capitals, major cities suburbanisation slowed down and moving back to city centres started; gentrification was very dynamic. In Hungarian urban areas out-migration, loss of urban population are still more dominant features, except in Budapest, where the process seems to reverse due to disappointments in the suburban forms of life, the incessant traffic problems, but also as a result of the renewal of cities.

The data of a representative sociological research for the metropolitan area of nine Hungarian cities conducted in 2005 shows that the processes of transition rebuilt the historically evolved, traditional centre-periphery structure; partly confirmed and partly reorganised it. The confirmation is verified by the strong spatial social hierarchy: starting from the city centre and progressing towards the city's outer districts, or suburban zones the presence of higher-status (the better educated, the skilled workers and higher income) classes hierarchically declined while the concentration of lower social status (lower-skilled, unskilled and low-income) groups increased.

The reorganisation was indicated by an analysis[1] of metropolitan zones by development levels: in neighbourhoods with developed infrastructure the previously seemingly clear social gradient "broke", the declining trend of social status stopped; then it started to rise again. This is because due to suburbanisation processes generated by the different inclinations and motivations of high and lower social classes the social structure of suburban zones became differentiated and was split to suburban zones and villages populated by high and low social status groups.

The research conducted in 2014 compared to the processes detected in 2005 showed a new trend: in 2014 the internal social hierarchy of metropolitan areas began to dissolve; the social structure of districts also became more balanced, due to the gentrification of cities and to the higher proportion of higher social status groups, including graduates[2]. Comparative analyses show while in 2005 starting from the inner city and progressing towards the outer parts of the city the proportion of low schooled people

[1] For the selection and the definition of suburban settlements to be involved in the research the rank-number method was used. In this procedure accessibility, housing, public and higher education, health care, entrepreneurship activity, taxation, income, employment, unemployment, mobility, social welfare indicators were assessed which was followed by the aggregation of indicators; this served as a basis for the ranking of settlements and on the basis of this ranking the three most developed and the three most underdeveloped settlements were selected.

[2] Behind the process lies a national trend, the increasing ratio of domestic graduates. According to the 2011 census, 18.2% of the 25 years old and older population had university or college degree, which is three times higher than it was in the year 1980. Changes in the ratio of graduates were already indicated by the differences in the ratio of graduates between the 2005 and 2014 samples. Their ratio was 18.4% in 2005, and 25.9%, in 2014.

increased and the number of people with high (or intermediate level) education decreased continuously, in 2014 this kind of hierarchical growth or decline eased: people of higher social status (including graduates, people with GCSE, vocational secondary schools and with higher incomes) occupy more and more space in the inner city parts, even though their proportion increased in the cities' outer districts as well *(for details see: Szirmai–Ferencz, 2015, pp. 79-101.)*.

This is demonstrating a domestic manifestation of a western European trend: namely that in big cities higher social status citizens continuously "crowd out" lower social status groups (it is also due to the high real estate prices), thereby expressing their social advantages (and better economic market position) to possess more favourable spatial conditions.

# Urban Development in Poland, from the Socialist City to the Post-Socialist and Neoliberal City

Grzegorz Węcławowicz

## The historical background to urbanisation

Urban development in Poland was endowed with its regional specificity: Polish culture had a landowning and rural character throughout the whole of the Middle Ages until almost the mid-twentieth century. The network of cities shaped at that time matched the needs of economy and rural settlements. In the Renaissance period this network was modified with innovations coming from the west that concerned social life, economic and cultural functions, as well as legal solutions, which made it possible to isolate people living "in line with urban law" in the social structure of a city. *(Gieysztor, 1994)* In Poland, the moderate growth of cities from the mid-seventeenth century was accompanied by a decline in their political and legal status imposed by "gentry democracy". Gentry represented the cultural, political and economic aspirations, while the bourgeoisie was often treated with suspicion, as competitors to power and privilege. As a result the cities were developing significantly more slowly than cities in Western Europe due to institutional barriers and to the social and geographical mobility of the peasantry which was restricted by serfdom. In addition, the economic slump and military defeats in

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the 17th and 18th centuries that in 1794 led to the loss of independence and partition of Poland caused the "agrarisation" of civilisation and urban decline. Historical research shows, however, that in 1578 the urban population amounted to 28.8% of the inhabitants of the Polish territory, and in the mid-nineteenth century (1842) their proportion was only 20% *(Herbst, 1954; Dumała, 1974)*. This phenomenon occurred in spite of the adoption of the modern Act on Cities in the May 3rd Constitution 1792 (the first constitution in Europe), which could not be implemented due to the lack of time and independence (since 1795 Poland had no independence).

The beginnings of urbanisation concerted with western-style industrialisation were initiated on the Polish territory as late as the second half of the nineteenth century. On the former Polish territory which was under Russian rule during the whole 19th century, new industrial towns were created or industrialised and developed, such as: Łódź, Zgierz, Żyrardów, Sosnowiec, Dąbrowa Górnicza, Królewska Huta. On the territory under Prussian rule all the new industrial towns were located or industrialised in the Upper Silesia region. One of the key factors of urbanisation and urban development was the fact that in all partitioned areas serfdom had been abolished by the end of the nineteenth century and partial enfranchisement of the peasantry was carried out, which enabled masses of rural population to move into the cities.

However, the rural migrants from the Prussian partition migrated en masse to Westphalia and other western European cities, while people from the Russian and Austrian partitions, especially from the overpopulated rural areas, migrated to North American cities, due to the limited capacity of local urban networks. In spite of these constrains, at the beginning of the 20th century the industrialisation level of the Polish areas was estimated at 26.6%, whereas in England and Wales it amounted to 77%, in France to over 40% and in Germany this proportion was 54.3% *(Dziewoński et al, 1977)*.

After World War I and regaining independence in 1918, the situation changed. The first National Population Census in Poland, carried out after regaining independence in 1918, showed that in 1921 only 24.6% (i.e. 6.97 million) of the Polish population lived in 632 cities. Within the period of almost twenty years of the Second Polish Republic in August 1939 the share of urban population increased to 28.4% *(Gawryszewski, 2005)*. A slight increase in

the level of urbanisation in the interwar period partially resulted from the growing overpopulation of rural areas that in turn followed from hampered foreign emigrations, the economic crisis that started in the 1920s and the economic lagging of peripheral areas forming the reborn Poland, which were left behind by the superpowers that took part in the partition.

For example the western part of the country covered the more industrialised and urbanised Silesia and Greater Poland regions with a dense network of cities and urbanisation at the level of above 30%, while the eastern part of the country covered agricultural voivodships – e.g. Nowogródzkie, Wołyńskie, Poleskie – where the urbanisation level was below 15%. In the period of 1918-1939 it was impossible for the Polish government to radically reduce this regional differentiation formed through over a hundred years of partition and lack of independence in such a short time period.

## Urbanisation under centrally planned economy

Analyses of territorial changes (carried out by A. Gawryszewski in 2005) caused by World War II in Poland, showed a balance of quantitative changes concerning the network of cities. As a result of moving the Polish border to the West, Poland lost 164 cities, these were mainly small cities with low wooden buildings, usually without urban infrastructure, as well as two large cities Vilnius and Lviv. On the other hand, Poland obtained 256 cities with compact brick buildings and good urban infrastructure. However, the cities on reclaimed territories – especially the largest ones: Wrocław, Szczecin, Gdańsk, Kołobrzeg, Elbląg – were significantly destroyed. The old territories were affected by even greater damages. Warsaw and many other major cities were also largely devastated.

The post World War II Population Census of 1946 gives only a rough picture of the regional differences, due to the fact that post-war migrations related to resettlements and displacements were not completed yet. This Census showed that in 1946 33.1% of the country's population lived in Polish cities (within its new borders). According to data from the National Population Census of 1950, cities were inhabited by 39% of the country's population.

From 1950s onwards, urbanisation in Poland was determined, mainly, by intensive industrialisation, which was driven first of all

by the needs of the communist ideology. It overlapped with the formation of a vision of urban life style, which became a symbol of social progress and modernisation of society.

The specific nature of this type of urbanisation under socialism in Central and Eastern Europe, was called "controlled urbanisation" by a Czech sociologist *(Musil, 1984),* while the process of the forced socialist type of industrialisation was named "imposed" or "forced" by a Polish sociologist *(Morawski, 1980)*. Both processes changed Polish society from a rural to an urban one, at least in numerical terms, and brought important modernisation consequences.

The research carried out by K. Dziewoński (1977) showed that in 1950-1955 both the urbanisation processes and the industrialisation processes were the most intensive. Within this period industrialisation was way ahead of urbanisation, while in 1956-1960, because the pace of industrialisation was slowed down, the urbanisation process gained some advantage. In the next decade, in the 1960s, the industrialisation process is again predominating, due to the imposition of selective registration restrictions which constrains migration inflow to urban areas by administrative means. In spite of this, in 1966 the number of people living in cities exceeded the number of people living in rural areas.

The migration pattern from rural to urban areas was to a significant degree regional in nature, i.e. it involved migration to the nearest major city. Interregional and intercity migration concerns mostly the largest urban metropolitan areas of Warsaw, Upper Silesia region and Tricity (Gdańsk, Gdynia, Sopot), which attracted the immigrants from all over the country.

In the next two decades (1970s and 1980s) the urbanisation process became more important than the industrialisation process, despite huge investments in industry. In the 1970s on average the cities grew by 2.4% per annum, the growth rate of the number of people in 22 cities exceeded 22% per annum *(Gawryszewski, 2005).* The decade of the 1970s was called the second stage of industrialisation, which was based on a scientific and technical revolution and increase in the share of qualified labour force in the production processes *(Dziewoński, 1988)*. The State's policy also aimed at increasing the living conditions and satisfying consumption needs (including housing needs) to a greater extent than before, especially in cities. The implementation of such objectives

was possible, partially, because the favourable international situation ensured easy access to cheap western loans and modern technology. The new industrial investments were mainly allocated outside the existing industrial regions (in the new industrialising cities), which followed from the idea of equalising spatial differences (especially in 1971-1974). As a result, such a policy strengthened urbanisation processes in the regions with a relatively lower share of urban population. It also led to significant quantitative investments and consequently to the increase of new housing resources in the areas of the existing urban agglomerations.

In the 1980s presented by the two National Population Censuses (1978-1988) the increase in the number of cities dropped. From the end of the 1980s onwards, further slowdown of the urbanisation process was observed. This was due to the introduction of martial law, the economic slump of communism in Poland and the start of economic restructuring as a result of the 1989 transformation. The new, most visible problem was the emergence of unemployment.

A more constant element of the slowdown of the urbanisation process was accompanied by a slower increase in Polish population since the 1980s (in general), due to a systematic decrease in the number of births, which continued in the next decades. The slowing down of the urbanisation process, however, is highly differentiated on the regional scale. The pace of urbanisation remains relatively higher in the eastern areas, where there is a further increase in the share of urban population, whereas in western areas the size of urban population undergoes stabilisation or regression.

## Polish cities as socialist cities

The cities created in Poland under the conditions of the centrally planned economy as socialist cities were different from the cities formed under market economy, which was proved by different sociologists and geographers *(Węcławowicz, 1979, 1988, 1992, 1993, 1996, 2007, 2013; Dangschat–Blasius, 1987)*. The series of numerous investigations on individual different Polish cities support such a statement in the case of: Poznań *(Gaczek, 1979),* Wrocław *(Jagielski, 1996),* Płock *(Kaltenberg–Kwiatkowska, 1982),* Toruń *(Jaroszewska–Brudnicka, 2004),* Kraków *(Zborowski, 2005),* Tychy *(Szczepański, 1991,*

*1993)*. It concerns the international perspectives written on Polish cities as well *(French–Hamilton, 1979; Enyedi, 1998; Regulska, 1987; Hamilton–Dimitrovska-Andrews–Pilchner-Milanovic, 2005)*.

The communist ideology was imposed with different success on the regionally differentiated urban areas which were formed in the past by different civilisation traditions (Russian Empire pattern, Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy pattern and German pattern). In post World War II Poland, i.e. on the current Polish territory, we can still identify the different urban structures formed in the 19th century (due to the partition of Poland). This regional structure concerns four former parts: Tsarist Russian partition (1), Austrian-Hungarian partition (2), Prussian partition (3), and regained western territory (4 – after World War II).

The concept of socialist city in Poland is closely related to the concept of industrial city. The communists in power treated the city firstly as a centre of political support from the working class and, only then, as a centre of industrial production. The new industrial cities, as well as fully reconstructed old cities, were created as socialist cities. Older large and medium-sized cities were transformed at a significantly slower pace. Warsaw and Wrocław are the special cases, because of the extent of war devastation with the extermination of over 800 000 inhabitants in the case of Warsaw, and the total exchange of the population in the case of Wrocław. Medium-sized cities underwent radical transformations only after large industrial establishments had been set up in them. New, huge complexes of housing estates for workers of the new establishments were introduced into the traditional structure of the city, which often had such far reaching consequences that the old urban structure was broken down and absorbed by the new style of blocks of flats. In spite of their historical heritage such cities as Bełchatów, Głogów, Jastrzębie Zdrój, Legnica, Łęczna, Lubin, Płock, Polkowice, Puławy, Konin, Tarnobrzeg, Tychy became in reality "new towns" located both, in the old and the new industrial regions.

Larger cities, which were not destroyed during the war and which had stronger cultural and historical traditions, such as Kraków, rather absorbed their new "socialist city-districts" Nowa Huta and did not allow for the predominance of the new form of development. Similarly, in the case of Częstochowa, in spite of the industrialisation "push", the city maintains its pilgrim and religious functions.

In 1988 in Polish and in 1992, 1996 in English the concept of the socialist city was presented concerning the Central European region as well *(Węcławowicz, 1988, 1992, 1996)*. The most significant features of the socialist cities include:

1. The domination of employment by the industrial production sector and a low percentage of middle-class residents (townspeople) meant that the inhabitants of these towns mainly consisted of the working class (proletariat).
2. The egalitarian principle and class homogeneity of socialist ideology resulted in relatively low levels of economic differentiation.
3. The central allocation of inhabitants to particular dwellings often forced citizens to live in undesirable social surroundings, reducing the chances of creating local communities.
4. The organisation of the social life of urban dwellers was around the place of work.
5. The city was absolutely dependent on the central government for its finances and was "organisationally divided". The centralised authoritarian system had split off different decisions concerning the city, which came from different government departments and, at the local scale, from the authorities of the particular cities.
6. The mayor represented the interests of the state against the citizens, rather than the interests of citizens against authority. Even the elected city councils represented no local interests but rather the central government and its policies. The municipal offices became units subordinated to the state administration.
7. Uniformity of architecture and urban landscape created a higher proportion of waste land and led to the deterioration of the old quarters of cities (except cultural heritage parts of the old towns).
8. The builders were pressed to construct first of all only blocks of apartments, and delayed the construction of shops, restaurants, schools and post offices. As a result, in the largest cities huge homogeneous estates emerged, usually with no adequate service facilities, and frequently inhabited by more than 100,000 people.
9. Environmental problems caused by industry and urban development were ignored. There were permanent attempts to

redistribute or eliminate visible presences of non-communist symbols from the city space.

10. There was an attempt to control the inflow of people to the city by administrative means.

Polish cities together with Czech and Slovak, and Hungarian cities conformed to these generalizations to varying degrees, while maintaining a national and European character to some degree *(Węcławowicz, 1992, 1998)*.

In respect to social composition, these cities were characterised by a predominance of the so-called producing professions in the employment structure, especially employment in industry. The share of other social categories was smaller, and urban society was to a great extent homogeneous in respect to class and only slightly differentiated in respect to economy.

It is important to mention that the egalitarian rules on class and economic uniformity, which had been adopted at the beginning, were relatively quickly and significantly reduced, and then totally abandoned. The social and professional composition of cities was determined by the control of registration (however, not so effective), which was transformed into a control tool to monitor the inflow of people to cities in line with the contemporary political interests and temporary economic needs.

In general, the evolution of urban areas in Poland could be characterised by the following priorities: post war reconstruction, industrialisation, drift toward the formation of egalitarian cities, the formation of the elements of elite cities, and, by the end of the socialist era, the gradual growth of social and spatial differentiations.

## The transformation of Polish cities into post-socialist cities

In Poland and in the other Central European countries the socio-economic transition that started together with the abandonment of the communist system in 1989 and 1990 brought the return of market economy and democracy. The changes in the urbanisation and spatial character of the city were already visible long before 1989, which was related to the crisis of the centrally planned economy and discredit of the idea of social egalitaria-

nism. The economic and political crisis of the closing stage of the real socialism resulted in reduced control over urban space and a vivid development of such phenomena as illegal allotments, illegal street trade, open and public presentation of patriotic, anti-communist and religious symbols, as well as the establishment of elite wealthy areas. All these factors eroded the image of the socialist city. The process of liberating Polish cities from the features of the socialist city was significantly accelerated when the political transformation was initiated.

The most important political and economic processes, which had a direct influence on eliminating the socialist city features concerned the following elements *(Węcławowicz, 1993, 1994, 1996):*

1. the return of the importance of land rent and the increased number of actors competing for space,
2. the return of self-government, the shift in the absolute control over space from central to local,
3. the increase of social and spatial differentiation and the changing rules of the spatial allocation of people from political to economic criteria,
4. the transformation of the employment structure from the domination of industry to the domination of the service sector,
5. the substantial transformation of the urban landscape and architecture,
6. the transformation of values and symbols, mostly by replacing many manifestations of politically symbolical space by other functions and symbols.

The key element which was the most important in the process of transformation was the return of the rent of land and other market mechanisms, as well as changes in the ownership structure that were related to them. Reconstruction of the economy brought radical changes in the employment structure in the cities, which consisted primarily in decreasing employment in the industrial sector in favour of employment in the service sector, and as a result the formation of a new social and political structure of cities.

The control exercised over space was moved from central to local authorities as a result of establishing actual territorial self-governments to represent the interests of local communities, there was also increase in the number of entities competing for

urban space and specific localisations, as well as change in the spatial allocation criteria from political to economic ones. Development of private entrepreneurship gained special significance along with a quantitative increase of small and medium sized enterprises, modernisation of urban organisation and management methods.

The reintroduction of real self-government in 1989 has had positive consequences for most urban areas. The democratic legislation encouraging the formation of new social connections and ties reoriented the public attention from place of work to place of residence, provided opportunities for the formation of new social groups and social interest categories. All these new groups and categories gradually became aware of their interests in the structure of cities and learned how to express their own interests through the democratic election of local representatives to local governments. The shift of control over urban space from central to local created many problems, firstly, due to the fact that the new self-government had not been prepared to deal with the emergence of several new actors competing for space. The learning process, however, even after the decades of democratic transformation and under the impact of European integration has not completely finished yet.

The political and economic phenomena listed above, above all, increased the social and spatial differences as well as changed the spatial behavior of city residents. The urban landscape and architecture also underwent changes, the intensity of land use increased; many areas of the cities changed their functions, especially in their central parts. The symbolism of many places also changed as they were given new significance or their old – national, historical or religious values were restored.

Under the conditions of market economy the urbanisation process consisting in migration from rural to urban areas, as well as the adoption of urban lifestyle and urban professions by rural residents may be classified in terms of winning and losing socio-economic transformations. The changes in the social hierarchy and structure had basic significance *(Węcławowicz, 2002)*. The best example of the above is the disappearance of the social group of rural smallholders employed in factories (peasant-workers, in Polish: chłoporobotnik) who played a significant part in the urbanisation of rural areas under the conditions of a centrally

planned economy. Emergence of unemployment in the 1990s affected, first of all, this social group. Geographical location within the areas affected by economic crisis or in mono-functional industrial areas was an important element that had an adverse impact on the development of many cities.

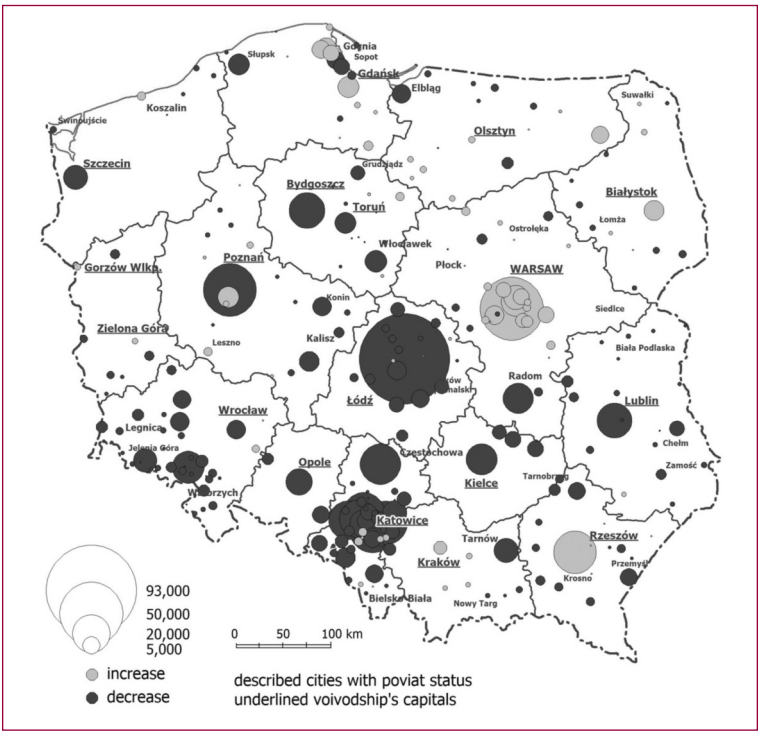
In the decades of 1988-1998 and 1998-2008 there was a significant change of trends within the scope of population development on a national scale in cities and villages. According to the data provided by the Government Population Council (2008-2009) in the first decade (i.e.: 1988-1998), the population figures in the cities increased by 495.2 thousand persons, and in rural areas these figures decreased by 102.9 thousand persons. In the next decade (i.e.: 1998-2008), population figures in the cities dropped by 393.8 thousand persons (partly as a result of a negative natural increase in cities), and in villages they increased by 252.7 thousand persons. It should be, however, recalled that the population figures dropped by 141.1 thousand persons in the whole country due to a negative balance of international migration and a decreasing level of natural increase. The contemporary urbanisation process takes place under the conditions of decreasing population figures in Poland (while temporary moderate increase for several past years will not change this general longer term trends). As a result the spatial pattern in urban population trends became evident *(Map 1)*.

In general, urban areas increased around the largest agglomeration in the suburban zone with strong urban shrinking of small and medium sized cities and with the particularly large depopulation of Łódź and Upper Silesian urban complexes.

Growing economic competition between the cities, as well as differentiated levels of economic development were the basic elements that shaped urbanisation and the extent to which the cities were attractive to their new residents. The competitiveness of cities that depends to a great extent on the inherited resources but also on the policy of local authorities determines the attractiveness for investments. The most competitive cities in respect of attracting investments and people are the metropolitan areas of Warsaw, Poznań, Wrocław, Kraków and Tricity (Gdańsk, Gdynia, Sopot).

The general regularity is that the investment attractiveness of cities drops as one moves from the west to east in Poland, and the qualitative and quantitative character of urbanisation processes

Map 1: Changes in the population figures of urban areas in Poland (2000-2008)




*Source: The author's own edition based on data of Polish Statistical Office*

change. In the western part of the country urbanisation is subject to restructurisation in the form of more rapid development of sub-urbanisation processes, the formation of a network of medium-sized cities and the large share of migration between cities (from smaller to bigger cities). In eastern Poland the classical form of urbanisation, which mainly consists in migration from rural to urban areas, is still predominating.

According to the 2014 data from the Central Statistical Office in Warsaw, it was 913 towns, of which 16 were larger than 200,000, that together accounted for over 33% of the urban inhabitants in Poland. The category of larger than 100,000 consists of 39 towns. The smallest category of towns, below 5000 inhabitants, involved 326 towns *(Table 2)*.

In general, the settlement system structure remains relatively balanced, which ranks Poland among the group of states with the highest level of settlement pattern polycentrism in Europe. Such

Table 2: Cities by size distribution in Poland (1950-2014) (%)

| Cities by size | Percentage of urban inhabitant in: | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1950 | 1990 | 2002 | 2014 | Number of cities in 2014 |
| Urbanisation in Poland | 39 | 61,8 | 61,7 | 60,3 | |
| Below 5 000 | 4,3 | 2,1 | 2,4 | 2,6 | 326 |
| 5 000 – 10 000 | 4,5 | 3,3 | 3,5 | 3,3 | 176 |
| 10 000 – 20 000 | 4,2 | 6,7 | 7,0 | 7,0 | 187 |
| 20 000 – 50 000 | 6,2 | 10,4 | 10,7 | 10,9 | 135 |
| 50 000 – 100 000 | 3,4 | 8,4 | 8,7 | 8,4 | 45 |
| 100000 – 200 000 | 6,7 | 7,9 | 7,8 | 8,2 | 23 |
| 200 000 and more | 9,7 | 23,0 | 21,6 | 19,9 | 16 |
| Total | | | | | 913 |

*Source: Central Statistical Office, Warsaw*

structure has positively distinguished and is still distinguishing Poland from other European states. The following Polish cities belong to the largest urban centers of the European Union, so-called MEGAs4: Warsaw, Krakow, Gdańsk-Gdynia, Wrocław, Poznań, Katowice along with Górny Śląsk conurbation, Łódź and Szczecin. A particularly important factor in the size structure of urban areas in Poland is that the capital does not exceedingly dominate over other cities in comparison with other EU countries. The situation is different, however, in terms of economic activity.

Currently the urbanisation level (in 2015) is very differentiated regionally from 77.3% in Śląskie voivodship to 41.3% in Podkarpackie.

## Toward the neoliberal city?

The processes of the transformation of post-socialist cities, from the very beginning to current developments have been occurring in the dominant neoliberal political context, together with the

impact of globalisation and European integration processes. The neoliberal policy – generally defined as a reliance on market mechanisms – which has developed in Poland and in other Central European countries maintained some regional specificities, particularly in the scope of social, economic and spatial policies affecting urban development.

The de-industrialisation processes, initiated before the collapse of real socialism in Central Europe, overlap with the post-socialist transformation, accelerating changes in employment structure, which have become one of the most important phenomena generated by the new social and political order in cities. In general, the decrease in the number of industrial jobs was not easily replaced by booming employment in the service sector, leaving former industrial workers unemployed. This shift in the employment structure remains till now an unresolved problem in former industrial cities not only in Central Europe but also in many urban areas of the developed world elsewhere.

The new phenomena which have shaped post-socialist urban space after the 2004 European Union enlargement overlapped with the more direct impact of the neoliberal attitudes. First of all, it concerns the lack of explicit urban policy at national and local levels. Secondly, acceleration in the increase of socio-spatial segregation at regional and intra-urban scale was widely observed. Thirdly, the whole built environment was gradually improved and refurbished. The forth phenomenon or consequence of the neoliberal impact has been the complex of changes in demographic and social behaviour, and the formation of new migration patterns on international, national, urban and interurban scales. Polish cities, like all Central European cities, have become open to the impacts of globalisation, and European-scale competition resulted in the search for new functional roles (i.e. niches in the economy or market place).

In case of Warsaw, the neoliberal direction of transformation is the most evident on the housing market *(Stępniak, 2012; Stępniak–Mendel, 2013; Górczyńska, 2015)* and also in population components *(Bierzyński et al, 2011; Bierzyński, 2014; Piekut et al, 2012)* and social segregation *(Marcińczak et al, 2012, 2013)*.

The last year evolution of EU policies including the new urban policy and particularly the shift toward more place-based policy interventions overlaps with the economic crises resulting in threats

to the economic prosperity of urban dwellers. In addition, the discovery and recognition of the negative consequences of following the neoliberal theory have become visible.

## The main component of urban policy in Poland

All elements of urban policy in Poland are conducted under the general legal framework concerning public administration and self-government. The constitution of the Republic of Poland identified the "gmina" as the basic self-government unit at the lowest level of administrative division (corresponding to the NUTS 5 EU classification). There are three types of those units: urban, urban-rural and rural gminas. The definition of urban is based on a legal status. As far as the urban areas are concerned, the following types of cities may be identified in Poland depending on their hierarchical status: cities with county (poviat) status, including cities like Warsaw as the capital of the country, others having regional capital status (voivodeships), and other sub-regional (poviat) county capitals status. The right of the poviats status for 65 cities was attributed by the 1999 administrative reform. The last category concerns the (gminas) cities which have urban status and mixed urban-rural status. All together there are 903 municipalities with the cities (with gminas competences), cities (with right of poviats competences) and cities of mixed urban-rural character (with gminas competencies) status[1]. Nearly each year the new administrative decision modified the urban statistics. For example the latest state of 2015 indicate 915 towns, of which 304 have urban status, (66 of these urban areas have also poviat status) and 611 communes of urban-rural status.

[1] Division into NUTS units. Situation on: 01-01-2015
NUTS-1 Region (6 Units groups of woivodships),
NUTS-2 voivodships (units 16)
NUTS-3 sub-regions (72 units – groups of poviats)
NUTS-4 poviats (314 units) plus 66 cities of urban status
NUTS-5 Communes (Gminy) – (2478 units including 66 units having urban status and poviat status.

The evolution and instability of legislation and governance of urban areas are visible in case of the capital of Poland. Warsaw as the capital and the largest city of the country represents one of the specific cases. From the beginning of the 1990s till 2002 Warsaw was a municipal association of 11 gminas, with the largest Centrum gmina (inhabited by one million people). Each of Warsaw's gminas had different status, objectives, interests bringing immediate conflicts and colliding competences (particularly at the time of the rebirth of local democracy). In October 2002 Warsaw became again one administrative unit with unified status, integrated budget and management. The President of the city together with the Council deal with all the general issues and coordination, however, all the 18 districts (with historical roots) at the lowest level, have auxiliary functions. While structural problems of governance in intra boundaries Warsaw seem to be solved, the unresolved issues remain the fragmented administration of the whole metropolitan area. Currently, since the end of 2015, the new government has initiated a discussion aimed at the formation of the Metropolitan Region of Warsaw as an independent unit from the rest of Mazowsze voivodship.

In general, national urban policies should be formulated as a guide for local governments at sub-regional or urban scales, as well as for those in government administration, for the business community and for any relevant social and non-governmental organisations. Such policies should set out the intentions, main objectives and strategy of central governments towards urban problems. Problems which are manifest at more local levels and strategies to address them could then be articulated in more coherent ways.

The current stage of urban policy formation in Poland is facing several important challenges. The spatial consequence of the dominant neoliberal political attitudes in intra-urban governance practice is the lack of efficient planning regulations which resulted in deepening the chaos of the inherited urban structures. In the formation of a new urban policy, the basic challenge lies between competitiveness and cohesion or between social and economic priorities. The pressure to be competitive on the European and global scale requires the formulation of a comprehensive urban policy at national, local and intra-urban levels. A policy which will be effectively (in practice) congruent with the social, cultural, spatial and

economic policies, and first of all with the strategic vision of the country's development in the next decades must be worked out.

In the process of forming the national urban policy the question of planning for whom should be seriously considered. The concept, that in the socialist countries planning (particularly spatial planning) was structured along ideological priorities, has been replaced in neoliberal attitudes by the concept of planning in the interest of the capital. However, some questions arise. Why not plan cities in the interest of society? What can we learn (efficiently adapt) from EU and OECD urban policies, documents and practices? In the document prepared for Poland the OECD identified the following challenges related to the future development of urban areas *(OECD, 2011)*.

The first concern is "an aging and shrinking labour force". The second one is related to the "industrial restructuring"; it indicated the continuation in the processes of industrial decline in terms of employment and increase in the service sector. The structural transformation of employment in the situation of inadequate skills will generate unemployment problems in the long term. The third challenge addressed "inequalities within urban areas and social concerns"

The next three challenges concern transport. On the regional scale it involves "...poorly developed transport infrastructure, which fails to connect urban systems and integrate the neighbourhoods within them." On intra urban scale the municipalities are the main actors providing public transport, but the most important challenge concerns urban sprawl and congestion with the radical increase of people employed outside their municipality. On the country scale the basic challenge concerns the lack of proper and efficient transport links between urban centres.

The permanent historical challenge concerns the "housing deficit" and probably will remain so in the next decades. As the Central Statistics Office indicates the 347 housing units per 1000 inhabitants in Poland remain one of the lowest in the EU. Such a problem overlaps with the large demand for modernisation and renovation of the old housing stock.

The last set of challenges concern environmental issues. In spite of the basic improvements since 1989 and particularly after EU integration in 2004 the basic problems still include wastewater treatment, air pollution, and the lack of energy efficiency initiatives.

## Conclusions

The question posed at the beginning of the socio-political transformation in the last decade of the 20th century "What should be done with the socialist cities in Central and Eastern Europe?" to a high extent has been answered in practice. The last twenty years of political, social and economic development has brought, in general, the substantial modernisation and improvements of living conditions in urban areas. The numerous former industrial cities, however, are still in a stagnant or crisis situation.

Currently the most important challenge is making urban areas less vulnerable to political, economic and environmental changes. One of the best examples of a field where such change is needed is that of environmental issues, particularly energy saving.

The dominant neoliberal approach to the role of local government at the district or city level needs some consideration. In general, a simple minded or naive application of market theory to the functioning of local communities remains too radical and insensitive because local governments cannot be treated like markets, particularly in the European context, where cities have followed historically diverse paths of development which have fostered and enriched their cultural diversity and local distinctiveness or uniqueness. The latter diversity is the outcome of constant interactions between the state, the market and local cultural traditions, which in the case of the cultural heritage of post-socialist cities have both positive and negative consequences.

The EU regional policies, particularly the cohesion policy including its urban dimension, will be a sort of "soft neoliberalism" which reminded me of the attempts in the deep past to create "socialism with human face", which in the end failed. What will happen now in EU cities depends to a large extent on progress in the development of democratic institutions and particularly on whether a strong and effective civil society is formed and fostered.

# Developmental Changes in Slovakia's Socio-Spatial Situation

Peter Gajdoš

## Introduction

The purpose of this study is to describe the developmental changes in Slovakia's socio-spatial situation in a wider historical context. We wish to focus on profiling differentiating and polarising tendencies in the Slovak society and their socio-spatial impact in terms of settlements and regions.

Slovakia's current socio-spatial situation is the product of a whole range of social changes which Slovak society and its spatial organisation have undergone. These were stages whose changes were of a short-term or long-term nature, as was the extent of their impact on the spatial organisation of society (at various spatial levels). The historically most important changes undoubtedly include the changes from an agrarian to an industrial society, and from a rural to an urban society. This was related to changes in housing, in the settled environment and its physical and spatial structures, changes in the settlements themselves, in their social structure and social environment, their way of life, environment etc. The results of these changes were reflected in the society's socio-spatial situation, which is a process of constant change in which both people's everyday activities and the influences of a macro-social and supranational (now global) level are also apparent.

The socio-spatial situation is characterised by a set of specific components (social and non-social) which are part of the society's living situation. Its contents are bounded in the first instance

The study has been realised within the confines of the research entitled "Social Polarisation in the Hungarian and Eastern-Central European 'New Town' Regions: Impacts of Transition and Globalisation" (K 106169), funded by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office.

by the historical dimension/ development. Slovakia's current socio-spatial situation is the result of continuing historical development and reflects a whole range of factors which are active in the long term and whose change is gradual.

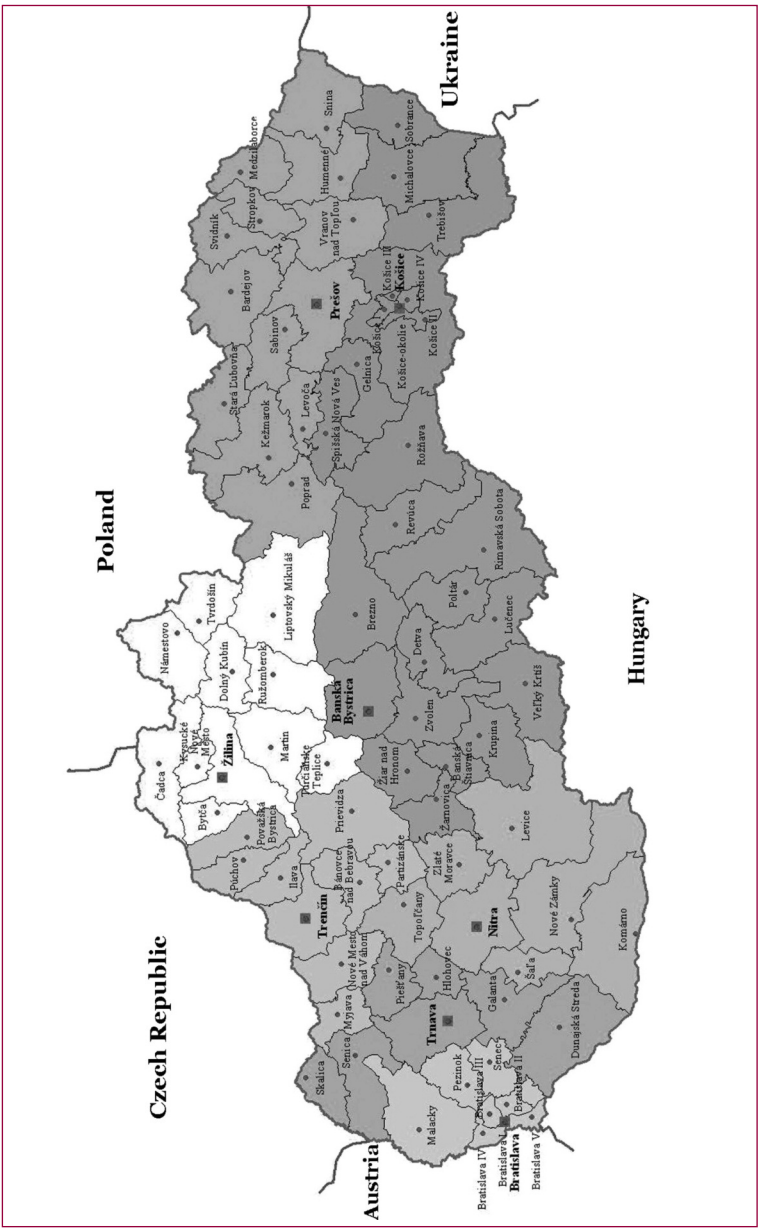
Fundamental changes have taken place in Slovakia's socio-spatial situation in several periods, stages when the specific impacts of processes appeared, changing the social, demographic, cultural, settlement and infrastructure components of society's socio-spatial situation. In our work, we wish to focus, in particular, on two main stages in the development of Slovakia's socio-spatial situation.

In the course of the 20th century and its period of pre-transformation (1930/50 – 1989), however, several central stages can be defined, differing in terms of their dynamics, the range of changes and their impact on society and its socio-spatial situation. The most important and widest-ranging changes took place in the second half of the 20th century and are associated with the significant effects of the processes of industrialisation and urbanisation. Their consequences were reflected in the fundamental change in the socio-spatial organisation of the life of society and they also have had important modernising effects on the society. The timeline of the central changes suggest that the majority of these changes took place during the period of Socialism, which was characterised by directive management, centralisation and state paternalism.

As a result of the series of changes from 1950 to 1990, the whole of society and the regional structure of built-up areas went through some massive changes. Slovakia entered this period as a very rural country with over 70% of its population living in rural municipalities, with a positive yearly growth rate in the rural population in all age categories, and ended as a country with over 56% of its population living in towns and with an average yearly fall in the population of rural villages in all age categories by the beginning of the 1990s.

During the second – transformational – period from 1990, associated with complex changes in Slovak society, the dominant factor became globalism and the growth of world economy, affecting all spatial levels and social segments of society. During this period, new factors and actors at a global level entered into the formation and development of society's socio-spatial situation, without any direct links to a particular territory or settlement. The impact of

Map 2: Territorial and administrative organisation of Slovakia (regions, districts)




*Source: The author's own edition*

globally-active political, social, cultural and economic processes which no longer have an immediate relationship with the systems of settlement of the socialist past is increasing. The sources and

consequences of differentiating and polarising processes taking place both in the vertical and horizontal structure of society are also partially changing.

In our study we seek to point out the developmental changes in the socio-spatial situation in Slovakia. Emphasis will be placed mainly on the period after 1989, when fundamental changes took place in the nature of Slovak society, although since the aim is to present the historical development of Slovakia's socio-spatial situation, I consider it necessary to describe the pre-transformation period, when fundamental processes of differentiation took place, some of the aftermath of which also has an impact on development in the period of transformation and on the consequences of globalisation. Particular emphasis will be placed on presenting mainly the social impact of differentiating processes at a regional level, as well as at the level of urban-rural relations. We wish to pay particular attention to developmental changes in towns, as well as in centres of innovation and in the economic and social centres of regions.[1]

## Historical development of Slovakia's socio-spatial situation

The development of the socio-spatial situation of Slovak society and its differentiation at different spatial levels were formed historically by a series of factors. The conditions for the development of society were long associated mainly with the growth of industry, which was developed in Slovakia in stages of varying intensity, bringing with it the development of various territories or settle-

[1] We will analyse the question at several levels, where knowledge is needed on Slovakia's territorial and administrative organisation, we will present some basic information on this subject. Slovakia is divided into 4 areas (NUTS II): the Bratislava region, western, central and eastern Slovakia. At NUTS III level, it has 8 regions; at NUTS IV it has 79 districts. *(Map 2)* The structure of population centres in Slovakia can be characterised as very fragmented with a large proportion of small rural municipalities. Slovakia has 2,890 municipalities, of which 138 are towns; the majority are small towns with a population of up to 20,000. Towns are distributed relatively equally across the whole of Slovakia, but larger towns are mainly concentrated in its western part. Slovakia is characterised by a dense settlement structure; the average distance between municipalities is around 3.5 km. The population density is 110 inhabitants/ $km^2$.

ments. From the 12th century to the end of the 15th century, Slovakia saw a large growth in mining and metallurgy. Important mining centres were founded: Banská Štiavnica, Kremnica, Banská Bystrica, Spišská Nová Ves, Smolník and others. Towns were also founded where crafts formed an important basis: Nitra, Bratislava, Trnava, Zvolen, Krupina, Košice, Levoča and others. Guilds were created, and the craft and commercial functions of towns were brought together. In the 16th to 18th centuries, many glass works, sawmills and paper mills were founded in the mountainous areas of central and eastern Slovakia. During the course of the 17th and 18th centuries, the territory of Slovakia was the craft and industrial base for the whole of Hungary. Favourable conditions for its own industrial revolution were only created in the second half of the 19th century, which was much later compared to developed European countries. The expected transformation of crafts and manufactures into factory production in the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century did not, however, take place.

In the 19th century, industrial development did exist in Slovakia; however, it was greatly differentiated in terms of branches and territories and consisted of small plants and businesses. Slovakia's socio-spatial openness to modernisation processes was complicated at the turn of the 20th century. Slovakia's late and slow industrialisation in the 19th century stood out for the significant fragmentation of industry and for its agrarian, backward areas; it took place within a dispersed network of population centres, even though the latter was already marked at the time by a certain amount of inter-municipal contacts and commuting to work from villages to the small towns of the period. The urbanisation of Slovakia in the 19th century was only partial, due to unfavourable conditions for industry.

The situation did not change greatly even during the First Czechoslovak Republic (1918 to 1938). The majority of Slovak towns were only centres for the surrounding villages; few of them were industrial and commercial centres. Slovakia found itself in the position of being Bohemia's agrarian hinterland, and there was no interest in its industrial development. On the contrary, some industrial sectors were closed down (metal-working, the chemical and textile industries and glassworks in particular). The dismantling of industry particularly affected the little-industrialised lands of eastern Slovakia and the southern part of central

Slovakia, thus deepening the existing territorial imbalance in the distribution of industry, which was reflected in a differentiated social structure in different regions of Slovakia.

During the First Czechoslovak Republic, no significant economic base was created for a more rapid urbanisation. There was a certain awakening in the 1930s, particularly in the heavy metal-working and chemical industries. The structure of settlements itself did not change very much during the First Czechoslovak Republic, and from 1930 to 1940 around 20% of the population lived in towns; in 1950 it was around 26% of Slovakia's population, which only goes to prove that the low level of urbanisation of society matched the low economic level.

Slovakia's main wave of industrialisation began after World War II and took place under the conditions of a planned, command economy, focusing mainly on building heavy and chemical industries, and armaments manufacturing. Slovakia's industrial backwardness was supposed to be solved by the removal of part of the industrial base from the Czech border regions. Around 245 companies were transferred, out of the 269 planned, and only 33 of them went to eastern Slovakia. This situation was characteristic not only for eastern Slovakia, but also for other, previously backward industrial areas (Kysuce, Orava, southern Slovakia). The reason was the fact that these areas were not ready in terms of infrastructure, transport and technology. This is why industry was concentrated into already existing industrial centres; existing factories were expanded, and new businesses were created to a lesser extent in Slovakia.

After February 1948, there was a sharp growth in industrial production, leading to changes in its sectoral structure and territorial distribution. The reason was the attempt to balance out economic growth and the standard of living between individual regions in Slovakia. Industry, often one single industrial factory, became the basis for the development of individual towns or regions. These factories helped the growth in each town's population, and industrialisation as such was an important factor in Slovakia's urbanisation.

The level of industrialisation and urbanisation only began to grow more intensively in Slovakia in the 1950s. At the beginning of the 1950s, Slovak society had a specific socio-demographic, cultural, economic, civilisation and urbanisation base. It was charac-

terised by its agrarian nature, and marked differences between regions in their economic, cultural and social levels. Slovakia had unfavourable economic conditions for accelerating industrialisation and urbanisation, whether in terms of unequally distributed job opportunities across its territory, the development of transport and roads, the range of job opportunities on offer in industry or in services, and the system of higher education was not developed either. Slovakia's settlement structure was characterised by a low level of population concentration in towns, and overall a relatively undeveloped town settlement structure, which matched the nature of economic development, as well as the high density of settlements and the easy access to economic centres.

The period from 1950 to 1970 is characterised by a marked acceleration in the process of industrialisation and urbanisation. During this stage, development began with the post-war reconstruction of the economy and population centres. In the 1950s, towns began to grow as a consequence of the development of industrialisation and the collectivisation of agriculture. In this period, industrialisation was very spread out in spatial terms; it was trying to address the question of the development of backward areas, governed by the principle of the equal distribution of productive forces. The development of industry in many cases led to the de-concentration of the population. The main criterion when deciding on the localisation of industrial works was the available sources of labour, which were made up to a great extent of the workforce released from agriculture, as well as a natural growth in the working-age population. The working potential was understood mainly in extensive terms. In this sense, it was positively influenced in each period by a favourable demographic structure and a relatively high implication of the working-age population in the work process. The rapid process of urbanisation only appeared in the 1960s, and most of all in the subsequent period (1970 to 1980). In 1970, three quarters of the urban population lived in towns with a population of over 10,000, although only one third of the urban population lived in towns with a population of over 50,000.

Even though industrialisation did not achieve all the expected effects, its exceptional benefit to Slovakia's general socio-cultural and regional development must be acknowledged. It aided the growth of individual towns and regions and increased the level of

modernisation and urbanisation of Slovak society. It also helped increase the population's level of education and standard of living, and improved the quality of life in all types of population centres. It created suitable conditions for the new social mobility of inhabitants of different ages and social categories. On the other hand, the differential tendencies in the development of individual regions and types of population centres in Slovakia were already strengthened during the period of industrialisation, and became fully apparent at the beginning of the 1990s with the beginning of the transformation of society. Although the change of Slovak society to an industrial society took place essentially at the turn of the 1970s, the predominantly rural character of its society remained. Secondary (indirect) urbanisation, however, was very active during this period. The transformation of society into a predominantly urban society only culminated in the 1980s (in 1980 the proportion of people living in towns exceeded 50%).

From 1970 to 1985 the most significant urban growth takes place, which is gradually absorbed more and more not by industry, but by significant growth in the tertiary sector. During this period Slovakia achieved its highest rate of growth in the numbers of urban population out of the whole period to date. As a result, it can be described as a "velocity acceleration" of the concentrated movement of the population into towns (accelerated urbanisation). After 1970, the development of 77 central towns – centres of local importance (district towns) – was preferred, where production, facilities and the population were concentrated.

In 1991, 72.8% of job opportunities (1.8 million in absolute terms) were concentrated in these 77 towns. From the point of view of the distribution of industry, socialist industrialisation had several particular features. The localisation of factories near the eastern border was given priority. Many industrial centres became the basis for the economy of a whole region, which meant this region was very vulnerable with a low potential for adaptation. In this way, interregional disparities were successfully reduced in many cases, and employment was increased, but gradually the negative consequences of this strategy became apparent, such as the low performance of economy, the low quality of production, the relative lagging behind of pensions, an environment without innovation, technological backwardness and environmental pollution.

The consequence of this was that during the 1970s the planned and directed rural-urban migration intensified greatly, in particular towards medium-sized and large towns, and newly-created industrial centres. This in turn created the need for intensive housing construction carried out mainly in the form of concrete panel housing estates on the outskirts of towns, where these new urban immigrants settled. From 1971 to 1985, 625,000 housing units were built, creating a large space for concentrating the population in towns. This was reflected in the rapid territorial and demographic growth of towns, which were not usually ready in terms of social, infrastructural and cultural facilities to deal with this influx of people. The quantitative "accumulation" of the town population (meeting the quantitative plans of urbanisation) did take place, it is true, on the one hand, but usually this happened without the adequate development of a social and technical infrastructure, and thus the socio-cultural effects of urbanisation were only partial, particularly in terms of the style and quality of life.

Table 3: Share of urban and rural population in Slovakia in period 1869-1990 (%)

| | Population | |
|---|---|---|
| | Urban | Rural |
| 1869 | 11,9 | 88,1 |
| 1880 | 12,7 | 87,3 |
| 1890 | 13,6 | 86,5 |
| 1900 | 16,0 | 84,5 |
| 1910 | 18,3 | 81,7 |
| 1920 | 18,0 | 82,0 |
| 1930 | 22,6 | 77,4 |
| 1940 | 24,5 | 75,5 |
| 1950 | 26,2 | 73,8 |
| 1960 | 29,8 | 70,2 |
| 1970 | 37,0 | 63,0 |
| 1980 | 50,2 | 49,8 |
| 1990 | 56,1 | 43,9 |

*Source: Gajdoš, P., Pašiak, J.: Development of socio-ecological situation of Slovak society. Bratislava, VEDA 1995.*

The end of the 1980s (1985 to 1990) was a relatively short period of some sort of urbanisation "lull", a moderation in urban growth. It was a period when so-called demographic urbanisation came to a standstill. A further increase in population came to appear unrealistic given the fall in the rural population, its source, and also due to the increasing problems in trying to satisfy the housing needs of new immigrants in towns. The territorial link between production and population centres became more fluid, enabling new approaches to their spatial organisation to be chosen. Industrial urbanisation of a concentrated/centralising type came to an end, when it exhausted its opportunities for development.

The final phase before the pre-transformation period (1980s) was specific in that the social, economic and political consequences of the industrial urbanisation and simple modernisation of the end-phase socialist period began to become apparent. The impact of factors from the nascent post-industrial and globalisation period could also be seen; these reached into all parts of Slovakia's socio-spatial situation and presented a whole range of problems and obstacles to development within the context of the demands made by these processes, as a result of the defects of social planning, including the "mortification of growth" in areas where urbanisation was more developed, the absence of metropolisation, dis-urbanisation as well as suburbanisation. This direction taken by Slovakia's settlement structure was also supported in the 1970s and 1980s by the strict application of the system of strategic population centres. The backbone of strategic population centres was supposed to be the hierarchy of so-called strategic population centres, which were supposed to be the focal points of territorial growth, were to provide services to the population of their catchment area and were also to be the target of investments. This meant the division of population centres into those to be developed and those not to be developed, which had an unfavourable, even destructive effect on restricting the development of mainly small rural population centres or their administrative merger with larger villages or towns.

As well as positive effects which brought about an undoubtedly marked shift towards modernisation and increased the quality of life and cultural level of Slovak society, the consequences of the development of regions and settlements during the pre-transfor-

mation period included, however, the widening and deepening of socio-demographic, economic and cultural infrastructure differences between regions and individual types of settlements, and the growth of the number of regions and settlements with unfavourable conditions for further development. Inequalities became apparent in one pole of population centres with the crisis of villages and small towns, and in another pole with the crisis of larger towns. In the rural pole, this was seen in the loss of population in villages, the rapid ageing of their population, the lack of an elite in their social environment, a lack of technology and social infrastructure, in the threat to the very existence of small villages where the demographic situation brought about a complicated situation for the reproduction of the local community.

The stagnation in population centres also affected small towns with the loss of their demographic vitality, economic and service facilities and the overall decline of their position in the structure of settlements. In the pole of larger towns with an intensive population concentration, the social and technical infrastructure was under-dimensioned, the environment devastated, the housing stock dilapidated and services little-developed. As a result of intensive growth, these towns saw a decline in their spatial compactness and the disruption of their inner socio-spatial stability as a consequence of the foundation of large-scale concrete panel housing estates on the edges of the towns. In the inner town, the population aged rapidly and almost the entire natural growth was concentrated in the town's housing estates.

The differentiation and polarisation of regional and population centre growth was the result of many factors (economic, social, political, territorial...). The concentration of economic activities (and subsequently of the population) was very selective in spatial terms. Industrial regions and larger towns were those that gained the most. Regions were thus polarised, mainly according to their position along the main urbanisation axes and zones. Non-urbanised areas of regions were marginalised, and in particular the border districts in southern and northern Slovakia, as well as certain districts of eastern Slovakia; the spatial periphery became gradually associated with social and economic problems.

The specific characteristic of Slovakia's post-war development was large population growth. During the period from 1950 to 1985, Slovakia's population grew by 1.7 million people (from

3.464 million in 1950 to 5.162 million in 1985). The bulk of this growth came from the natural population increase. In 1950, the natural population increase was 60,053 people and in 1956 it rose to 66,652, falling to 44,521 people in 1980. *(Statistical office of the SR)* Intensive population growth required both new job opportunities, and housing facilities etc. A longer-term comparison shows that among districts with the largest population growth from 1930 to 1991, or from 1930 to 2001, there are many districts with later large town centres, as well as many eastern Slovak districts (eastern Slovakia had the highest birth rate). The population in the Bratislava region grew the fastest; it doubled, mainly due to migration. For eastern Slovakia, just a slightly lower growth was characteristic, as a result of a high birth rate. In western and central Slovakia, the population was multiplied by 1.5. We can see, however, marginalised territories from the southern, ethnically mixed zone in particular among the territories with a falling population. A significant milestone in the intensity of population growth of regional groups was the 1970s. The polarised position of the northern border area, which became the area in Slovakia with the most dynamic population growth, became even stronger in comparison with the southern border area, whose backwardness compared to other areas deepened further in the course of the following period.

The beginning of intensive industrialisation after World Was II meant for the majority of Slovak towns the period of greatest economic, population and territorial growth, together with the significant extra impact of urbanisation. This is documented by the situation of the ten largest towns in Slovakia (according to their situation in 2010) which in 1950 had a population of between 10 and 23 thousand, with the exception of Bratislava (almost 200,000 inhabitants) and Košice (around 63,000 inhabitants). From 1950 to 1970, and particularly during the most intensive period of urbanisation (1970 to 1980), their populations increased several fold. Today, Bratislava has a population of around 450,000, Košice around 240,000 and the others between 50 and 100 thousand inhabitants. This situation was influenced to a significant extent by the high population growth in Slovakia from 1950 to 1970.

The period from the 1950s to the 1980s, combined with the intensive, centralised processes of industrialisation and urbanisa-

tion were associated with an extensive migratory movement caused both by the localisation of job opportunities and by the opportunities for social mobility in developing towns. After World War II, we can see large migratory movements of the population (mainly from the countryside towards towns) in Slovakia. The dynamics of internal migration in Slovakia saw important changes in the post-war period. We can differentiate several developmental trends. From 1950 to 1980, there was a large growth in migratory movements associated with the building of a centrally planned economy and concentrated industrialisation and urbanisation. In the 1980s, settlement migration fell as a result of the deceleration of investment activities, the construction of housing and the stabilisation of the structure of regional production. In the 1960s and 1970s, some specific characteristics of the mobility of the workforce were created which remain in place in Slovakia today. Dependence on public transport and a strong bond with the houses people built became an obstacle during the later period of economic transformation, when the regional distribution of production activities changed, and a more significant mobility of the workforce towards the new economic centres was required.

During the period of internal migration in the 1970s, the main destination was Bratislava and Košice. At this time, up to 132,000 people moved to Bratislava from the rest of Slovakia, and just under 50,000 people moved away. In the 1970s and 1980s, Bratislava's high attractiveness for settlers mitigated the fall in western Slovakia's proportion in the country's population. During this period, the migration was mainly from the countryside to the towns. The migration, aided by the state, of people from villages to selected towns, mainly large towns at the beginning of industrial urbanisation, was quite natural; later on it led to the emptying of the countryside's population, and was linked to the subsequent processes of the rapid ageing of the rural population, the fall in the demographic opportunities for the reproduction of the settlement community. It resulted in a diminution of the workforce and loss of opportunities, a reduction in social infrastructure, a reduction in the possibilities of using existing housing and other problems. This led to the countryside gradually finding itself with developmental problems, both in terms of human potential, and regarding the economic base and level of its living conditions and opportunities for development in general.

The period of pre-transformation is also characterised by intensive labour migration. Out of the total economically active population, up to 53% travelled to work in 1960. This proportion gradually fell in 1970 to 43%; in 1980, it grew to 46% and fell to 37% in 1991. In 1991, 928,099 people travelled to work. With the population growth in towns, the population physically shifted towards job opportunities. In the 77 town centres themselves, only 13% of the economically active population travelled to work outside their home town. On the other hand, 60 to 80% of the economically active population in rural settlements travelled to work in 1991. The intensive migration of the population was caused by the fact that at the end of the 1960s, 60% of job opportunities were to be found in towns where just under 30% of the population lived at the time. Similarly, in 1980 rural areas offered only 25% of work opportunities, whereas almost 50% of the population lived in villages. *(Buchta, 1999)*

High labour migration was also the result of the fact that the places where industry was concentrated were relatively easy to access, and thus the fast-growing non-agricultural rural population was forced to travel to work in towns, since the vast majority of this population was relatively strongly anchored in the countryside through the ownership of a house. The important development of industry and the growth in the numbers of people it employed, meant at first that not all employees could be provided with housing, not even in the main industrial centres. In Slovakia, this situation was resolved with the extensive construction of individual housing, mainly in rural areas, aided by the state.

The extensive construction of individual homes in the countryside stabilised people's settlement there, thus creating a large population group which lived in the countryside and worked in the town (rural-urban population). The latter also effectively changed the social structure of the countryside.

From 1950 to 1980, Slovakia's socio-spatial situation was influenced not only by intensive processes of urban industrialisation aimed at concentrating the population, but also by managed interventions in resolving the large differences between regions, using mainly industry and its localisation in less developed regions. Another aspect which influenced the socio-spatial situation in Slovakia was the intention of evening out civilizational differences between the town and the countryside, where Slovakia was

most densely settled and which, during the pre-industrial period and at the beginning of industrialisation, did not require the concentration of workforce in towns and took advantage of the easy accessibility of economic centres, a trend which was helped by the dense and cheap public transport network linking towns with their rural hinterland. Migration into towns was all the more intensive because of this in the 1970s and 1980s. This had an impact on the growth of towns and their regions, as well as providing the opportunity to react to new development trends.

Despite the problems and disproportions mentioned, the development stage of industrial urbanisation was a period which brought the most significant and fundamental changes to Slovakia's socio-spatial situation, which had already exhausted its opportunities for development in the 1980s. It gradually came into conflict with incoming new development trends, as well as the needs, values and preferences of the population, which began to appear even in the field of settlement with new demands for creating conditions for socio-spatial development corresponding to the post-industrial and globalisation period.

## Development of the socio-spatial situation in Slovakia during the period of transformation

Slovakia's starting position at the beginning of the transformation process was marked by a whole range of material and system-based differences compared to the developed countries of the EU. The material differences were mainly associated with the low level of competitiveness of individual regions and towns, with their unsuitable sectoral structure, an insufficient capacity for innovation, a mono-structural economic base, as well as a differentiated quality in terms of human potential and the bad transport accessibility of certain regions as a result of a lack of sufficient infrastructure facilities. System-based differences were mainly associated with the absence of value criteria when conceiving development programmes for individual areas, with the lack of complexity and inefficiency of the use of sources of development within the region, as well as with the slow creation of management institutions both at town and regional level. *(Tvrdoň, 2005)*

In the development of Slovakia from 1990 onwards, newly-arising and re-emerging differential dimensions related to the post-totalitarian and post-industrial transformation of society combined to bring about changes in the social stratification and value focuses of the population, as well as uneven territorial impacts. The result of the spatially selective action of the transformation processes was a newly-shaped socio-spatial differentiation of society at different spatial levels. We can identify it among regions, among urban and rural population centres, as well as among population centres within these types of population centres *(Gajdoš–Pašiak, 2006)*.

In the 1990s in particular, and later too, changes took place which also contributed to making qualitative changes in population centres more dynamic. A reform in public administration at local level (1991) was introduced, later at regional level (1996 and 2001), and competencies shifted to a local and regional level (2002-2004).[2] Slovakia gained a new territorial and administration structure (1996), thus creating territorial conditions for more effective population centre-based and region-based development, although more at a macro-regional level than at sub-regional or micro-regional level.

These changes led to the development of a new hierarchy of population centres and regional structures, and above all to the polarisation and heightening of disparities at a local and regional level. On the one hand, this strengthened intra-regional and inter-regional relations within the urban network, the need for mutual cooperation and integration by using joint planning activities; on the other hand, it contributed to widening disparities at the level

[2] It was beginning to implement the reform of public administration in the early 90s, which should be completed in 2020. The reform is divided into several stages, within which are being developed systematic steps towards forming a rational form of government. It is an important part of the reform of government relations and local self-government. Part of the previously completed phases of this reform was the restoration of self-government municipalities, the legal personality of communities (municipalities gained autonomous status in deciding on local issues), the new territorial-administrative organisation of the country (spatial organisation of public administration), the decentralisation of state powers to local authorities (municipalities and autonomous regions), the fiscal decentralisation, the modernisation and computerisation of public administration.

of regions and their parts, reflected in a deepening of their economic, social and cultural differences.

Slovakia's regional development from 1990 to 2006 was conditioned above all by four groups of "factors": *1)* post-communist transformation (the democratisation of society and the arrival of market economy), *2)* the arrival of the post-industrial stage in the development of society, *3)* endogenic factors "typical" of all post-communist countries, particularly those belonging to the Visegrad Four (hierarchy of built-up areas, macro-position attraction, and the economic specialisation of regions) and 4) exogenic factors (including globalisation, manifested in the localisation of direct foreign investments). *(Korec, 2010)*

As a result of this whole set of interconnected changes, there was both a gradual change in the position of individual regions from the point of view of the attained level of social and economic development, and also an unequal territorial distribution of "new" phenomena such as unemployment, foreign investments, the growing tertiary sector etc. *(Blažek, 2001)* Development problems were experienced more significantly in those regions which had inherited from the period of central planning a markedly unsuitable structure for the local economy, in particular regions with a high proportion of heavy industry and mining, where the unfavourable economic structure was also combined with social and environmental problems, as a result of which these areas had a negative image, which influenced the decisions of potential investors, as well as the migratory behaviour of the population. Mainly rural regions, or regions which were on the periphery compared to economic centres, or in locations on the outskirts found themselves in an unfavourable position for development.

Development at the level of built-up areas was relatively dynamic during the transformation period; it had a different impact, however, in urban and rural population centres. The economic and social differentiation deepened not only between urban and rural population centres but also within these types of population centres. Differences in access to jobs, the quality of human potential as well as in living conditions and the infrastructure facilities deepened between the urban and rural environments. At town level, differentiations grew mainly between Bratislava and other towns, as well as between larger (regional) towns and other towns (for example – GDP, number of jobs, the proportion of foreign

investment, the quality of human capital, a high proportion of tertiary and quaternary sector, scientific and research potential, etc). In the countryside, this took place between large and small villages; mainly smaller villages found themselves in a more difficult social and economic situation. The influence of regional identity (particularly in the case of little-developed regions) is also strongly felt, together with the impact of spatial localisation in relation to the main urban/ economic centres.

The period of transformation can be divided into two specific stages, which differ by their course, by the factors involved and by their impacts on each socio-spatial level of society.

During the first stage of transformation (1990-2001), which prioritised a rapid "shock" strategy of reform for the economy, Slovakia – still part of Czechoslovakia – experienced a rapid and deep economic collapse. The quick privatisation of state property, the closure of ineffective factories, the limitation of the government's intervention in the economy, the liberalisation of prices and the job market, the reliance on the market's self-regulatory function and further characteristics of this stage of transformation caused problems in Slovakia resulting from the disadvantageous structure of its industry, its technological backwardness and low level of competitiveness. The problem was not really the unilateral preference for economic factors but rather the excessive emphasis on rapid economic change which heightened social and socio-economic disparities. These disparities mainly affected particular social segments and social groups and were concentrated in certain territories and built-up areas *(Bunčák et al, 2013)*.

Those who were most dependent on the state, relying most on social guarantees provided by the state, on the system of institutional care were often the poor. Seasonal workers in industry, unqualified workers, as well as a large part of the Roma population were the ones most reliant on socialism's social safety net. They were the very people who under these new conditions were pushed out of the official job market and became dependent for the most part on occasional and badly paid work. They were joined by agricultural workers who ended up without an income from work after the privatisation of state property and the break-up of former agricultural cooperative farms *(Danglová, 1997)*.

Particularly in rural areas, there are social groups in the population who more and more often and markedly find themselves in a

position of social exclusion, among whom an unstable career, low social status, unhealthy consumer habits, low individual and group aspirations, poor access to education, limited social contacts etc. are common characteristics.

Perhaps the most characteristic accompanying feature of transformation in this period was the rapid growth in regional socio-economic disparities. Individual regions with varying primary and locational potential and with a differentiated level of use of the latter, differing quality of economic and human potential, differing ability to react to the new conditions of market economy and to the heterogeneity of social processes, developed in differentiated ways. The development positions of each region depended not only on the quality and development accessibility of their potentials, but also on their different "starting positions" from which they entered the transformation process. During the transformation period, built-up areas also experienced significant changes in their human, or social potentials, in the conditions of their population centres and in their overall development background.

Processes associated with globalisation and the uneven socio-economic development of individual areas and regions in Slovakia were linked to the increasing openness of the economy; its supranational integration put more demand on the competitiveness of businesses and regions. A characteristic trait was the polarisation between dynamic growth in metropolitan areas and slow development or stagnation, even regression, in peripheral areas and regions with low potential for growth. It is possible to earmark areas integrated into the global economy and places which remain outside the main flow of economic change. It was mainly the traditional metropolitan areas of Bratislava and Košice, together with Žilina and Trnava, where important economic activity from foreign capital was localised, that can be considered successfully integrated into the new economic relationships. Peripheral rural areas, in contrast, are not sufficiently equipped and competitive enough. The differentiation in development potential is also reflected in the selective localisation of foreign investments and in the concentration of progressive economic activities.

The majority of investments which support the development of infrastructure, or its maintenance, goes into urban areas, and has a positive impact on solving a whole range of their transformation problems. This also applies to the allocation of foreign capital,

whose greatest proportion was placed in Bratislava and the Bratislava region, representing in 1993 56.1% and in 1996 66% of its total volume in the Slovak economy. This trend continues today, and up to 70% of direct foreign investments went to the Bratislava region in 2012. The second region with the largest proportion of foreign capital is the Košice region (6.3%), followed by the Žilina region with 6%. The Žilina region (Kia Slovakia), together with the Bratislava region (Volkswagen Slovakia) and the Trnava region (PSA Peugeot Citroën) naturally profit the most from the growth of the automotive industry in Slovakia. *(Statistical office of the SR)*

One of the significant and most negative characteristics of the development of the job market in Slovakia was unemployment, which appeared soon after the beginning of the economic transformation as a result of the application of the "shock" transformation of the economy not only in industry, but also in agriculture; in 1991, there were around 300,000 registered unemployed people in Slovakia. The unemployment rate in Slovakia from the beginning of the 1990s continued to rise, and by 1999 had reached 19.2%; in 2006 it fell to 13.3%, falling to 12.7% in 2010 and 12.3% in 2014. *(Statistical office of the SR)* The region with the lowest unemployment has long been the Bratislava region. In contrast, the highest unemployment rate has long been found in the two eastern regions, the Prešov and Košice regions, and also the Banská Bystrica region. These three regions have 55% of all the unemployed in Slovakia. Unemployment in Slovakia began to fall significantly and systematically after 2005, but it is a fluctuating trend, which was unfavourably affected by the crisis after 2008. The situation for the short-term unemployed is better; the long-term unemployed are in a worse situation. The long-term unemployed (those who have been unemployed for longer than one year), however, make up the larger part of our unemployment statistics.

The number of long-term unemployed who have not worked for more than four years rose in all Slovakia's regions from March 2012 to March 2015. The most marked growth during this period was in the Prešov region, increasing by 6,400 people to 20,900. This was followed by the Košice region, where the number of long-term unemployed increased by 4,100 to 18,100 people. The third worst off is the Banská Bystrica region, where the number of long-term unemployed rose by 3,300 to over 18,200 jobseekers. As the

length of the period of unemployment grows, so does the ethnic make-up of the unemployed change; over half of all long-term unemployed people are Roma. *(Registered unemployment, The National Labour Office, 1999)*

The dramatic nature of the changes during the period of transformation can be seen in the area of housing. The starting-point at the beginning of the 1990s was a period when there was an important reduction in housing construction and the real estate market was not functioning. Compared to the level in 1989 (33,000 homes completed), there was a marked fall in construction (around 6,000 homes annually) at the beginning of the 1990s. The housing problem was accentuated mainly in towns, where it was also associated with the loss of housing, mainly as a result of the transformation of homes into other premises, particularly for commercial use.

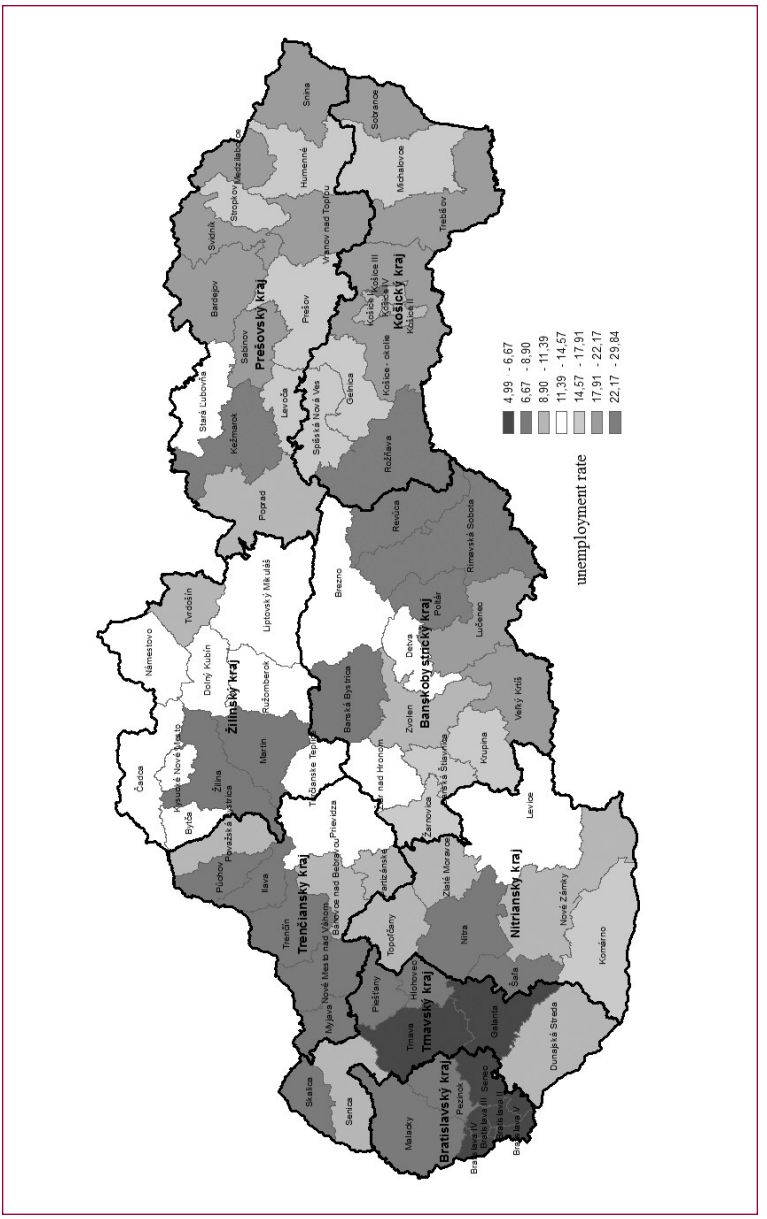
The restitution of housing also affected the development of the housing situation, and a wide-scale privatisation of housing (based on an Act from 1993) was launched in the 1990s. From 1991 to 1995, there was a net growth of only around 20,000 homes in Slovakia. In 1995, only 1.15 homes per 1,000 inhabitants were built. The situation in the second half of the 1990s did not change significantly, and in 1997, for example, only 7,172 homes were completed. In 2001, 10,321 homes were completed in Slovakia and 18,834 in 2009, when the construction of 20,325

Table 4: The unemployment rate (from registered unemployed) in Slovakia (1996–2014) (%)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1996** | 10,8 | **2007** | 8,1 |
| **2000** | 17,5 | **2008** | 8,4 |
| **2001** | 17,5 | **2009** | 12,9 |
| **2002** | 16,5 | **2010** | 13,0 |
| **2003** | 15,3 | **2011** | 14,4 |
| **2004** | 13,0 | **2012** | 15,3 |
| **2005** | 11,3 | **2013** | 14,4 |
| **2006** | 9,2 | **2014** | 13,6 |

*Source: Statistical office of SR*

Map 3: Unemployment rate from registered unemployed in districts of Slovakia (in 2014)




*Source: The author's own edition based on data of the Statistical office of the SR*

homes began. *(Housing construction in SR)* Completed housing included a large number of houses (47.9%), most of which were individual homes built in suburban population centres in the rural

hinterland of towns. A total of one third of the homes built in 2009 were to be found in the Bratislava region, whereas eastern Slovakia had only 13.5% of the total of homes completed in the Slovak Republic. In 2012, 15,255 homes were completed, of which 30% were in the Bratislava region, but three little-developed regions (Banská Bystrica, Prešov and Košice) had only 22.9% of homes. *(Statistical office of the SR)* The most intensive construction of homes took place both in large towns (Bratislava, Košice), in the context of their status as their region's natural economic centre with important investor activity, and most of all in the hinterland of large Slovak towns, which is related to the process of suburbanisation. The lowest growth in housing was recorded by towns in southern and western Slovakia.

Since 1990, when the market began to play an active role, this was also reflected in the migratory movement of the population, where changes in the population's main directions of migration appeared. In the 1990s, there was also an important change in the population's migration trends; there was a fall in people moving larger distances, limiting migration to the district level, a reduction in the concentration of the population in towns, a relative increase in commuting (to work and for other reasons) which can be considered as a boom in the process of suburbanisation.

From the point of view of internal migration, the new conditions in the 1990s had an effect mainly on the spatial stabilisation of the population. However, the question of housing most probably played a decisive role, together with the lack of a properly functioning housing market, unaffordable housing particularly in the urban environment and in Slovakia's economic centres, and also the marked collapse of housing construction. Intensified internal migration after 2000 was linked to the growth in the construction of homes and the opportunities for obtaining the funds needed to buy homes, the partially improved affordability of homes and the shaping of market conditions in the sector of home ownership and sales.

At the same time, the dominance of moving short distances increased (from municipality to municipality within the district), as well as to important economic centres. The turnover in internal migration in 2013 indicates that 75% of those moving did not cross the borders of the region. Almost half of all migrants moved within the district (46.2%). *(Statistical office of the SR)* So far, the hypothesis that Slovakia's population will move from areas with high

unemployment, a low number of jobs and a lower average wage to regions with the opposite characteristics has only partially been confirmed. *(Podolák, 2006)* An important role in this process is probably played by migration abroad for work. *(Bahna, 2011)*

Opportunities for moving are influenced by the price of houseing, which is often not affordable for potential migrants (particularly from little-developed regions). These people then deal with the situation by commuting to work, even over longer distances. This is a well-used formula in Slovakia. From the point of view of the destinations of migration within Slovakia, the Bratislava region has the greatest power of attraction, and the Prešov and Košice the lowest attraction. Among the ten districts with the largest losses of population due to internal migration, there are eight districts from eastern Slovakia *(Office of Statistics of the SR)*.

A fundamental characteristic of the first stage of transformation was the intensification of the differentiation and polarisation of Slovak society based on location, settlement and social space. Society became polarised both horizontally, as shown in the economic, social and infrastructural differentiation between regions and types of population centres (socio-spatial differentiation) and at the same time vertically (socio-economic polarisation), which was expressed in the differentiation between economic and social subjects and social groups. Vertical differentiation is also apparent in the social and demographic structure, in the unemployment rate and in conditions for social dynamics (of the individual or family), as well as in the population migration brought about by these changes. Vertical polarisation has a strong impact on the social stratification of society, creating a new social layer of wealthy people and also one of the poor and unemployed. *(Gajdoš, 2001)*

Korec points out that during the period after 1989, remedial steps were taken as part of the transformation in Slovakia to correct the "industrial" regional structure deformed during the socialist period. At the same time, there is a gradual implementation of new post-industrial processes in the development of society. This means that both sets of processes "aided" differentiated regional development, or significant regional divergence. Since 1998, globalisation has joined these two sets of processes, multiplying the growth in regional differences with one of its basic manifestations, direct foreign investments *(Korec, 2010)*.

In the 1990s, new factors began to affect Slovak society's socio-spatial situation, their impact in various areas and territorial units showing up in differing ways. In these changing circumstances, the impact of the quality of the accessibility and the ability of individual territories and population centres to face up to the change in economic and social conditions became more marked, affecting their competitiveness. However, here too the burden inherited from the past proved significant, i.e. very individual specific features of this or that region or built-up area came to prominence. The influence of the so-called west-east gradient is apparent, meaning that territories which are closer to the developed countries beyond the Slovak border (mainly Austria) develop more intensively.

Slovakia's passage into the second (post-transformation) phase of transformation (we limit it here to the period post-2002) created new qualitative opportunities for the development of regions and population centres. This was a period of qualitative change, when the first stage of transformation was more or less over, which was marked by the creation and growth of regional differences. Slovakia's spatial division on a macro level into the "wealthy north-west and poor south-east" was clear and the border between developed and little-developed regions was practically stabilised. On the other hand, however, the regional processes of differentiation continued, or continued in differentiated ways on an individual spatial level. Disparities grew in the sense that problems were still more and more concentrated in little-developed regions. This concerned not only the indicators of economic performance and competitiveness of these regions (and related subjects, such as unemployment, poverty), but also concerned the area of socio-demographic structures and the socio-cultural environment.

A specific feature of the post-transformation period was the fact that the main centre of the processes of polarisation and differentiation shifted to an intra-regional or micro-regional level, where their internal potential was made apparent (including the broad concept of human potential) for effective endogenic development.

During this period, some important changes and reforms took place in society. In 2004, Slovakia joined the EU. By 2006, the transformation of public administration was practically complete, a condition for carrying out effective regional policy, and from 2007 Slovakia began to use financial funds from the EU. This created qualitatively new conditions for solving socio-spatial dispari-

ties; however, regional disparities shaped during the previous period appear differently in the case developed regions, and differently in the case of backward regions and their sub-regional and micro-regional structures.

This is also evident in the territorial differentiation of Slovakia's economy, which is characterised by the fact that the polarisation between more developed western Slovakia and the regions of large towns on the one hand, and the backward rural areas of central and eastern Slovakia is clear at a regional and sub-regional level. This is confirmed by the fact that during the post-industrial period, the dominance and role of metropolitan regions within the regional structure of the state increased. As the country's capital and its key economic and cultural centre, Bratislava is clearly Slovakia's most dominant metropolis. Its whole range of tertiary and quaternary activities, naturally located in Bratislava, meet the demands of the whole of Slovakia and complicate opportunities for other regional centres *(Bleha et al, 2010)*.

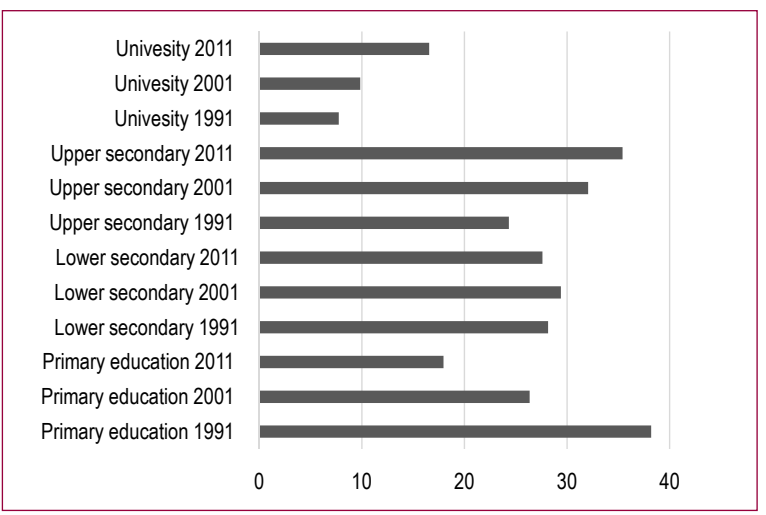
In the field of population, the opposite is true. Areas with the highest reproductive rate remain the north and east of Slovakia. This causes a growing discrepancy between economic backwardness and a favourable population situation. Growth has shown that these regions are gradually reducing their population increase, even though they retain their status as a population resource for the Slovak republic. They are reacting to the complicated socio-economic situation in which they have found themselves for a long time. On the other hand, the favourable conditions for growth in Bratislava and the Bratislava region during the previous period are beginning to be reflected in the population revival of this area and in an improvement in its population situation.

During the last decades, the educational structure of Slovakia's population has changed in a relatively significant way. As a result of institutional changes in the education system, as well as increased aspirations by young people, the proportion of secondary vocational schools has fallen, the proportion of secondary schools offering a school leaving exam has risen, and the number of university students has risen sharply. The result of these changes is a sharp fall in the proportion of young people who are preparing to be blue-collar workers, or to carry out specialised trade activities, and the proportion of university educated people is growing *(Bunčák et al, 2013)*.

From 2001 to 2011, the level of education of the Slovak population changed significantly in favour of people with completed university education. While in 2001, the proportion of permanent residents with university education was 7.8%, in 2011 it was already 13.8%. University-educated inhabitants increased from 2001 to 2011 in all Slovak regions. In 2011, the largest percentage of university-educated people was in the Bratislava region (26.2%), in the Košice region (13%) and in the Žilina region (13%). In other regions, the proportion of people with a university education ranged from 11.5% to 12.5%. On the other hand, the regional fall from 2001 to 2011 in the percentage of the population with secondary education is, among others, the result of the regionally weak links between vocational education and the needs of the regional economy during the transformation period. During this period, the "shift" from a lower level of secondary education to higher levels is clear. *(Statistical office of the SR)*

At the end of the 1990s, and particularly after 2001, the differentiating process of the development of population centres was significantly influenced by the process of suburbanisation. As a result, the growth of rural population centres near towns (and of small towns) became much more dynamic, as they became attractive residential areas for wealthier social groups originating

Figure 2: Level of education of the population in Slovakia (1991–2011) (%)




*Source: Statistical office of SR*

from the urban population. In contrast, problems were quicker to affect that part of the rural settlement structure which was losing the economic base it had been associated with until then, where the urban background was traditionally slight and where the ability to take comparative advantage of its rural nature and ecological countryside values was weakened. This concerned mainly the southern belt of Slovakia, the north-east and the east of the country. This is where problems are concentrated, with very unfavourable consequences for those living there and for the growth of communities. *(Gajdoš, 2005)*

Overall, it can be said that the process of widening disparities in Slovakia's population centres and regional growth continued during the second stage of transformation, or was stabilised on the polarised basis of the first stage. However, spatial levels where the central point of polarisation appears, changed; the sources and consequences of differentiation also partially changed. It was shown, however, that the limitation of active regulatory possibilities by municipalities, the region and the state during the process of the global social transformation gradually led to the implementation of trends in spatial and social segregation with all its consequences from the intolerable migration of high-quality human resources to towns and developed regions, through the economic and social marginalisation of certain groups of population centres or types of population centres, the concentration of poverty in certain population centres or territories etc. It is a type of vicious circle, when the actions of one factor strengthen other factors and their effects are then cumulatively reflected in the stagnation or decline of a certain region or population centre.

## Specific features of transformation changes in towns and their socio-spatial structure

The process of transformation took place in the urban environment in a more dynamic way than in the countryside, and even the expressions and impacts of these changes are more widespread, but different in terms of content (and values), which was related to Slovakia's specific features, its settlement and the size/specific features of the towns. The transformation of towns is a double transformation, which is also about the return to the long-term

trends in the growth of population centres, which began at the turn of the 20th century and were blocked during the socialist period. In Slovak towns, not only the conditions for internal growth after 1989, but also the specific conditions for the integration of towns and town areas into supra-regional and global structures, as well as the impacts of globalisation were apparent.

At the beginning of the 1990s, it was already possible to identify in Slovakia a return to a certain natural growth in population centres, to the strengthening of the self-governing authority of population centres, as well as changes in the development trajectories of population centres at different spatial levels and types of settlement. It has to be pointed out, however, that towns and their urban environment showed a similarity with the situation in the western part of Europe, with their gradual industrial urbanisation at the end of the 1980s, despite differences in conditions for development during the socialist period. This can be explained by the fact that industrialisation inevitably led to the same consequences everywhere, such as the migration from villages to towns, suburbanisation, the spread of the urban network, the integration of villages into town agglomerations, etc. *(Pašiak, 1990)*.

The urban settlement structure was characterised from the beginning of the 1990s on the one hand by a certain stabilisation in urban population centres which turned to a fall after 2000 (if we consider mainly the quantitative indicator of population); on the other hand, the economic and innovative position of towns increased, for example, according to the number of job opportunities in different sectors of the economy, in their information capacities, in the quantity of people travelling here for work and for their facilities etc.

Developmental changes in towns in Slovakia are associated with a set of socio-spatial problems linked to the shaping of the new physico-spatial and socio-spatial structure of towns, to a re-evaluation of the functions of individual town spaces, as well as to residential mobility, residential segregation (accelerated socio-economic differentiation of society), residential and commercial suburbanisation, the need to resolve the problems of town centres (turning into financial cities), as well as to housing estates and their revitalisation etc.

Changes took place in the status of towns within the structure of population centres as well as in the relations between towns.

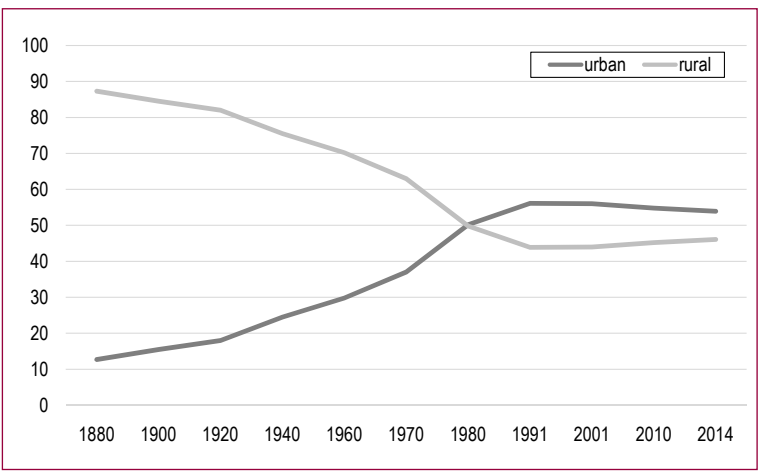
Transformation led to the end of previous networks of relations between population centres organised by the state, which were partially replaced by market-orientated relations. Towns were in competition for high quality human resources and finances, particularly foreign investments. At the same time, however, population centres – towns in particular – joined inter-municipal cooperation and integration programmes. However, differences between different types and size categories of towns remain (or are even widening), which is a result both of their realistic potential and of their spatial localisation. Bratislava's position in particular is specific, as an area with important potential for growth not only in the national context, but also in a Central European and European context.

At the beginning of the period of transformation, our towns were often exposed to the need to radically change their economic base and replace their usual industrial base with another economic sector. These were often difficult changes with significant impacts not only on employment but also on the reorganisation of the economic and social lives of the town and its population. The effects on the towns and their populations were not always easy to deal with and resulted in a more or less significant social impact, not only in the town, but also in its catchment area (often the district), considering the economic connections between this area and the towns.

The greatest change and developmental trend for towns in Slovakia is the significant change in their population growth, which was one of the important characteristics and conditions for growth for towns in Slovakia at the end of the 1980s. Since the middle of the 1990s, the situation in Slovakia has relatively clearly signalled the end of the population growth of towns, the end of urbanisation in its concentrated form, and the passage to a new developmental trajectory of town population growth. Towns in Slovakia in the 1990s began to lose inhabitants as a result of the rapid ageing of their population, as well as due to people moving to the countryside. The trend of leaving towns is also related to people's changing values in relation to housing and preferences for where to settle. Interest has grown for living in places with a good environment, with certain social and security qualities, in smaller areas with good access to jobs, and to the facilities, culture and schools of towns.

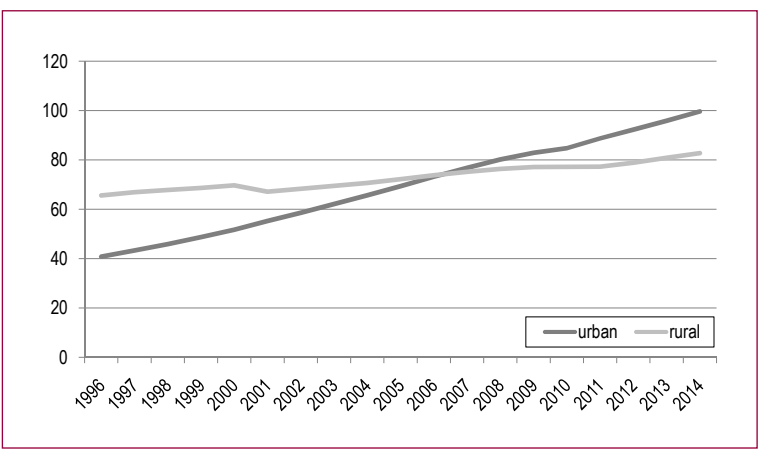
After 1990, the social situation of people in towns changed, which was reflected in the area of housing. The upper and middle-classes in formation reacted to new opportunities and changed their housing estate life, which did not meet their spatial, functional or even aesthetic criteria for housing, and started looking for a more suitable environment to meet their housing-related ideas. For wealthier town inhabitants, there is a tendency to move away from housing estates and to look for a "higher qual-

Figure 3: Development of the share of urban and rural population (1880–2014) (%)




*Source: Gajdoš–Pašiak, 1995; years 2001, 2010 a 2014 by Statistical Office of SR*

Figure 4: Ageing index in urban and rural areas in Slovakia (1996–2014) (%)




*Source: The author's own edition based on data of the Statistical Office of SR*

ity" of housing, particularly in the newly-founded locations of estates with family houses in the suburbs and near the towns; this first applied to Bratislava, but is now the case for all large towns.

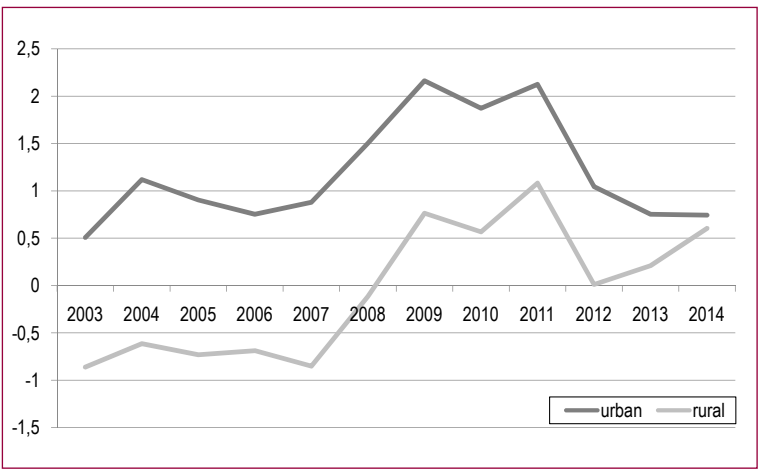
Towns still retain a certain qualitative lead in potential, conditions for growth, infrastructure, and today the dynamics of their development are much higher than in the countryside. Mainly larger towns have greater economic and social potential. Their economic basis is diversified with a strong percentage of activities in the tertiary and quaternary sectors. These towns are currently the centres of areas or regions and, for individual regions in today's globalised world, act as intermediaries of ideas coming from abroad. Large towns have better social and technical infrastructure and a more favourable demographic and educational population structure. It is clear that larger towns and their regions have better conditions for a successful transformation process. Current tendencies in urban areas will probably continue to increase, mainly for the benefit of Bratislava, Košice and regional capitals.

Towns are taking up the position of the preferred type of population centre. It is justified by the fact that in the main the absence of larger towns is an important obstacle to the development of regions in Slovakia, regions which might concentrate activities, investors and become an activating pole for the growth of the entire regions. In the case of southern, north-eastern and eastern Slovakia, this is multiplied by the insufficient size of the transport infrastructure, its position at the edge of the country and its neighbouring position with the less developed regions of neighbouring countries. The need to focus in priority on the development of towns which might have the function of "development leader" for their district (region) has been pointed out. Since the town structure, mainly in little-developed regions of Slovakia, is founded on small or medium-sized towns, this function cannot be fulfilled. On top of this, investors mainly prefer towns in western Slovakia, mainly because of the quality of their human resources and state of their infrastructure.

From the 1990s onwards, we note a whole range of internal differentiating processes in – mainly large – towns, which are reflected in their socio-spatial and functional situations. We note socio-spatial pressures of a segregational nature, as well as

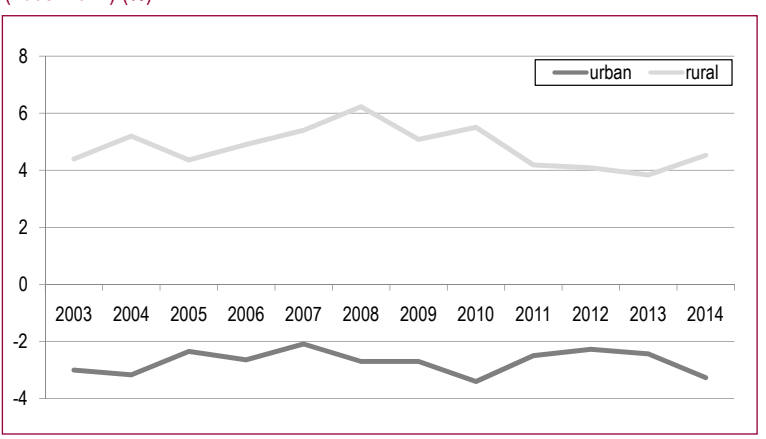
a new evaluation of the function of individual town areas, in many cases under the pressure of increased commercialisation. The result is that certain functions are increasingly pushing out less profitable activities, leading to changes in the functional use of town centres in particular, to a large decrease in housing and facilities. The important reinforcement of the tertiary function is taking place at the cost of the gradual weakening of the residen-

Figure 5: Crude rate of the natural increase of urban and rural population in Slovakia (2003–2014) (%)




*Source: The author's own edition based on data of the Statistical Office of SR*

Figure 6: Crude migration rate of the population in urban and rural Slovakia (2003–2014) (%)




*Source: The author's own edition based on data of the Statistical Office of SR*

tial function and a fall in population in these parts of towns. Social polarisation, an increase in differences between individual classes of urban society is becoming more intensive. This can be seen in the creation of residential areas with luxury housing (e.g. gated communities), as well as areas of towns where socially vulnerable people are concentrated (a typical example is Luník IX. in Košice).

The development of towns was more and more influenced by the intensification of the processes of suburbanisation and deurbanisation, which are moreover very selective socially and spatially, and from which only certain categories of population and rural settlements profit. *(Gajdoš–Moravanská, 2011)* In the conditions present in Slovakia, where the suburbanisation process was delayed by blocking its natural development during the socialist period, we can talk about several stages in this process which differ both socially and spatially, and in terms of their consequences. In the first stage, this concerned mainly the rich inhabitants of larger towns, who left for the nearby rural hinterland of the town; in terms of space, this process was concentrated mainly in the surroundings of Bratislava, and partially of Košice. In the second stage, the majority of towns in Slovakia took part in this process (isochronic in terms of time or distance), and even the size of the rural area affected by the process of suburbanisation was much larger. Mainly young people and young families, together with people with a higher socio-economic status left towns for suburban locations in Slovakia. Today, we can note a further shift in the development of housing preferences, particularly among the highest social classes. Satellite towns have been gradually left behind by the rich population who have moved to areas of town with high-quality villa housing or family residences in attractive locations in the town. Social prestige purveyed by a "good address" is increasing in importance. It appears that the large wave of suburbanisation is beginning to calm down in Slovakia, mainly around larger towns, and the influence of re-urbanisation is beginning to show. This is also influenced by changes in the centres of towns, which are being physically and functionally revived by processes of commercialisation, as well as by the creation of specific areas in inner towns, revitalised by the process of gentrification. However, this concerns only a certain number of towns in Slovakia and a small number of town areas *(Gajdoš, 2013)*

This momentum of built-up development is again considerably penalizing the less developed regions of south-eastern Slovakia, dominated by districts founded according to the structure of small rural settlements with small towns of a predominantly rural nature. In this environment, the status of towns is different from that in the western part of Slovakia, and the effects of suburbanisation are also more modest.

## Settlement and regional impacts of the socio-economic differentiation of society

With the arrival of processes of transformation and globalisation, growth in Slovakia significantly impacted differentiation and polarisation on all relevant spatial levels of society, as mentioned earlier.

For all post-socialist countries going through transformation, the same rule applies, namely that the change of their societies to a new economic, social and political basis created conditions for a change in the developmental trajectory in the socio-spatial area, too. In the previous period, the latter was affected by factors which complicated – or distorted – natural tendencies for development in the settlement system, as well as the expectations of growth for urban and rural settlements and various large or otherwise typologically differentiated forms of settlement. The consequence was the marked appearance of processes of differentiation and polarisation both in the structures of the territorial communities and in settlements. Slovakia's socio-spatial situation from 1990 onwards clearly reflects this growth in social, economic and also spatial (in terms of settlements and regions) disparities.

The transformation processes in Slovakia, associated with fundamental changes in the societal system, accompanied by a new political, economic, social and administrative situation, had marked and effected the new conditions for settlement and regional development. Taking into consideration the very different "starting positions" of individual Slovakian regions entering the transformation process, socio-economic differentiation deepened, or the positions of the regions were newly aligned on the basis of centre-periphery or developed-undeveloped. There was a concentration of social and economic problems in certain territo-

ries and regions, which was reflected in the growth of the typological differentiation of regions or territorial units.

In practice during the period of pre-transformation, we could already observe in Slovakia marked inter-regional differences which became even deeper during the period of transformation, and certain dimensions of differentiation were highlighted. The continuing transformation of society sharpened new regional disparities which currently take the form of clear social and socio-spatial inequalities. Current regional disparities are mainly expressed in terms of the share of regions in the creation of GDP, in their unemployment rate and level of poverty, in the amount of foreign capital invested, in the regions' capacity for innovation, in the level of income, in the population's standard of living, in the dynamics of the development of small and medium-sized businesses, in the level of use of intra-regional sources of development, in the quality of human resources, in their social and demographic structure, in the quality of life etc.

Table 5: Defined regional types and their quantities

| Regional type | Number of districts of this type | Proportion of this type out of SR's districts (%) |
|---|---|---|
| **Type 1 – very developed type** | 4 | 5,4 |
| **Type 2 – developed type** | 8 | 11,0 |
| **Type 3 – mainly developed type** | 13 | 17,8 |
| **Type 4 – transition type, inclining towards a developed type** | 12 | 16,4 |
| **Type 5 – transition type, inclining towards a backward type** | 6 | 8,2 |
| **Type 6 – little-developed type** | 10 | 13,7 |
| **Type 7 – significantly backward type** | 10 | 13,7 |
| **Type 8 – marginal type** | 10 | 13,7 |
| **Total** | 73 | 100,0 |

*Source: Gajdoš, Moravanská, 2005*

We will attempt to document the deepening of the impact of processes of differentiation and polarisation both at a regional and settlement level, and the profiling of their specific socio-spatial structure by means of the results of typological analyses.

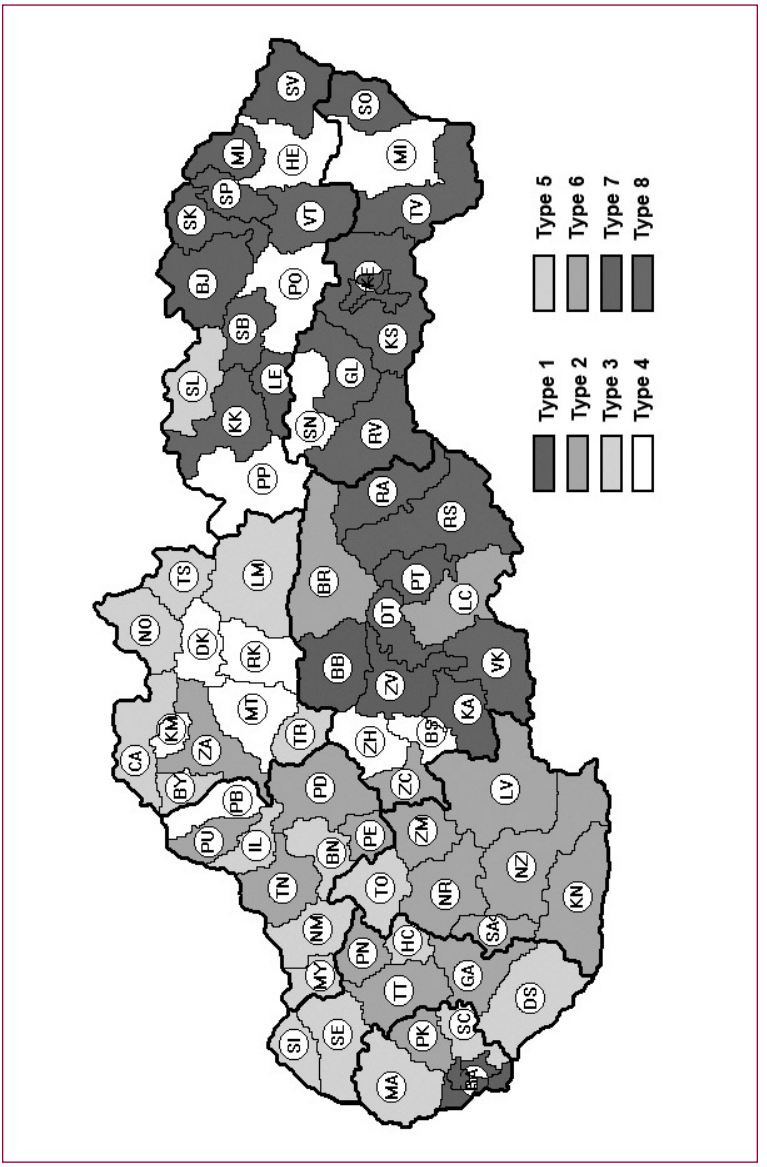
The situation of deepening inter-regional differentiation and polarisation is documented by the typology of the regions of Slovakia.[3] By means of a multi-dimensional analysis, 8 regional types were identified based on different levels of development (table 2). Type 1 groups together the most developed regions of Slovakia. Types 2 and 3 represent developed regions with mainly favourable conditions for development. Types 4 and 5 represent transition types inclining more towards a favourable, or problematic situation, and types 6 to 8 represent various types of little-developed regions, differentiated by different factors which produce (impact) their problematic nature.

The regional typology above shows that it is mainly the regions of large towns (town regions) which are classed among the most developed (types 1-3). This is mainly the case for Bratislava, Košice, Banská Bystrica and Zvolen. The districts of Pezinok, Piešťany, Trnava, Prievidza, Púchov, Trenčín, Nitra, Žilina are also characterised by a high level of development and are also mainly based on important town centres. On the other hand, the little-developed and marginal regions (types 6-8) are mainly districts from the south of central Slovakia, and above all the majority of districts of eastern Slovakia.

The above-mentioned typology also demonstrates how Slovakia is developing in a markedly differentiated way as far as regions are concerned. On the one hand, developed regions have been formed with a mainly urban structure, with strongly developed economic (in particular manufacturing and services) activities or with intensive agriculture, which continue to attract new activities, create an

[3] The basic analytical framework for the typology of regions was composed of 6 problematic dimensions covering relevant areas of potential and development for each of the SR's districts *(economic dimension, political-administrative dimension, social dimension, infrastructural dimension, environmental dimension, settlement-spatial dimension),* which were decomposed into 11 factors (variables). This block of factors, filled with over 50 indicators, was the basic framework on which the typological analysis of each of the SR's districts was based. The synthesis of the state in each of the problematic areas under scrutiny was used to build up a synthetic indicator of the level of development, thus classifying every district on a typological scale (very developed – marginal).

Map 4: The spatial location of regional types in Slovakia




*Source: The author's own edition*

attractive environment for investment activity and a modern civic and technical infrastructure. On the other hand, little-developed regions have been formed, mainly of a rural nature with growing levels of unemployment, a weakly developed and poorly diversified

structure of manufacturing and services, less intensive agriculture and developed forestry, a lower level of education of the population, undeveloped technical and social infrastructure etc.

The regional typology shows that in Slovakia, there is a wide range of regional types, and the basic line dividing them into socio-economically "strong" and "weak" is becoming more and more relevant. Within the territory of Slovakia, we can observe a marked difference between districts in the east and west of the country, as well as between the little-developed regions of the southern and northern border territories. Less developed regional types are spatially concentrated and form a whole territorial band, mainly from the districts of southern Slovakia stretching from western to eastern Slovakia, and also the districts of east-

Table 6: Definition of social types of settlement and their representation

| Social type of settlement | Number of municipalities of this type | Proportion of municipalities of this type (%) |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Municipalities with an urban population structure | 145 | 5,01 |
| 2. Outskirts of towns | 523 | 18,09 |
| 3. Municipalities with above-average employment in industry | 697 | 24,10 |
| 4. Industrial municipalities with elderly population and empty housing | 352 | 12,17 |
| 5. Municipalities with above-average employment in the primary sector | 487 | 16,84 |
| 6. Markedly agricultural municipalities with declining population | 89 | 3,07 |
| 7. Municipalities with high unemployment, high birth rate and low education | 153 | 5,29 |
| 8. Municipalities with a prevalence of pre-productive population and high birth rate | 324 | 11,20 |
| 9. Declining municipalities | 100 | 3,45 |
| Municipalities with missing data, or specific function | 21 | 0,72 |
| Total | 2891 | 100,0 |

*Source: Gajdoš, Moravanská, 2009*

ern Slovakia. It is not a territory where problems have appeared only during the period of transformation. It is a territory where the historical backwardness of the territory is clearly marked, a feature which processes of industrialisation and urbanisation disguised to a certain extent, as is also reflected in the area's infrastructure.

As well as a growth in regional disparities, there is also a deepening of inter-settlement differences, and not just at the level of town-countryside, where the situation in certain areas has been changing radically over the last decade (compared to the situation in the 1980s or the beginning of the 1990s) to the benefit of the countryside. Even within these types of settlement (for example between small and large rural villages, or small and large towns) there is a more significant differentiation and polarisation. This process of differentiation at a settlement level leads to the expansion of the typological differentiation of settlements in Slovakia, reflecting the deepening differences in their social potential, living conditions and development capacities.

Social differentiation between different types of settlements is becoming significantly greater, as documented by the social typology of settlements.[4] The typology of settlements pointed to the existence of a wide spectrum of types of settlements, as well as the marked disparities, becoming even wider in some areas, in the human potential of settlements, the existence of social barriers to development in certain types of settlements in various combinations and often their spatial concentration in certain regions (territories).

This presentation of the quantities of each type of settlement within Slovakia's settlement structure shows that as far as the number of municipalities is concerned, the industrial type of settlement is dominant, which corresponds to the industrial nature of the majority of Slovakia's territory. Together with industrial

[4] The analyses concerned 2,891 cases (i.e. all the municipalities in Slovakia), which were characterised by 16 variables in six fields (education, economic activity, spatial mobility, age, birth rate, housing). The social typology of settlements is based on deviations from the Slovak average for each variable. Each municipality is thus characterised by 16 characteristics and by their distance from the Slovak average in the given variable. The summary characteristic for this settlement type is calculated on this basis.

municipalities which are characterised by an ageing population and a larger quantity of uninhabited housing, they make up 36.3%. The most marked intensity of suburbanisation, which can be seen not only in the hinterland of larger towns, has appeared in a relatively high proportion of the type of settlement known as town outskirts, which show similar structural characteristics in population to towns. The third most numerous type of settlement is agricultural municipalities, where employment in agriculture is not dominant but is significantly above the SR average. Municipalities with a prevalence of pre-productive inhabitants and a high birth rate overall are also a more significant type, which is, however, much differentiated internally since it is made up on the one part of municipalities from traditionally populous areas (the north of central and eastern Slovakia), as well as of municipalities with a higher representation of socially disadvantaged groups with a high birth rate.

The typological analysis of the settlements identified two important socio-spatial processes. On the one hand, there is the shaping of town agglomerations and town regions documenting the strengthening of the positions in towns in the system of settlement, and also in the sense of the expansion of their social structural characteristics into the hinterland of towns, which is to a large extent the result of the process of suburbanisation and the movement of the population from the town to the country. We can consider the process of depopulation – the marginalisation of certain settlements and regions in southern and eastern Slovakia (partially settlement type 4, type 5, type 6 and type 9) as a certain anti-pole of suburbanisation processes. This also concerns some smaller territories with scattered settlements, primarily as a result of emigration from these areas. Some indicators of population development indicate the gradual demise of these areas.

On the other hand, settlement types with very complicated and unfavourable combinations in the characteristics of their human potential and settlement conditions are clearly defined, and characterised by the accumulation of various social obstacles. These include, for example, social problems (high unemployment, low education, high proportion of the population of post-productive age, low economic activity, emigration from the municipality), which are specifically concentrated in regions, and are associated with rural settlements. Or there are social obsta-

cles which appear in various combinations of the structural characteristics of the population and settlements, such as:

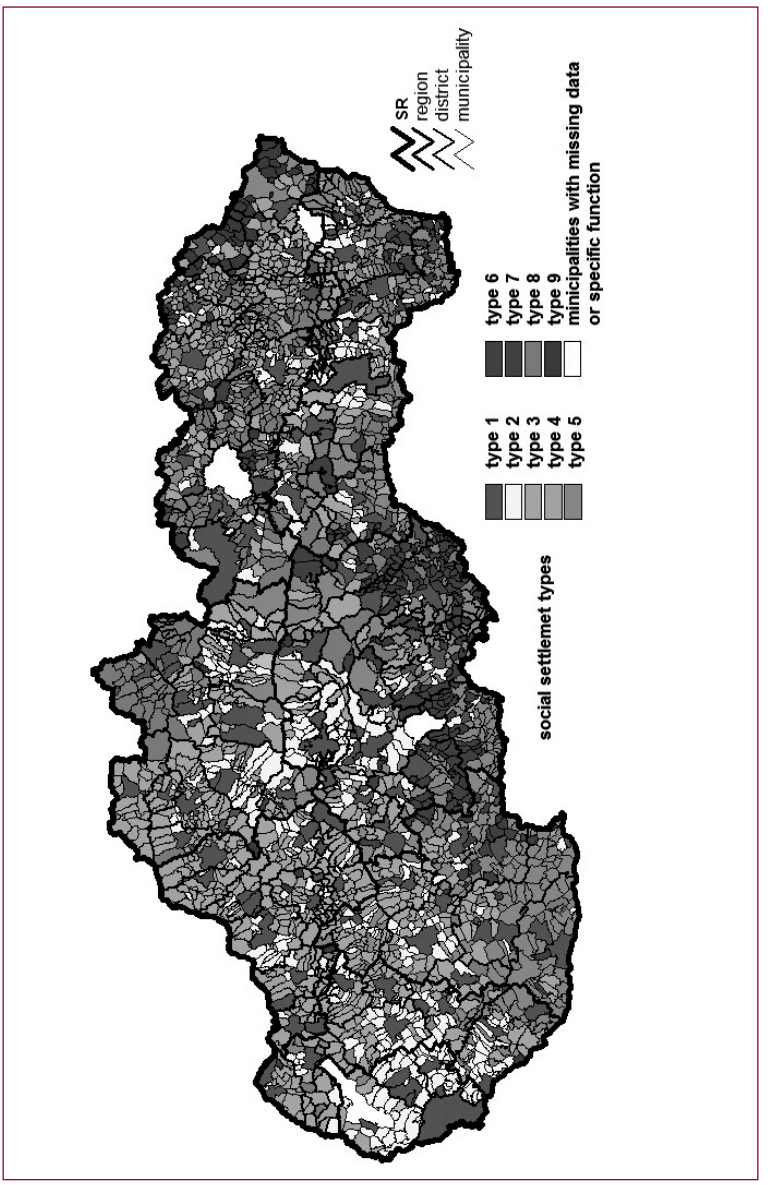
- high proportion of population with primary education – low economic activity – high proportion of population working in agriculture – high proportion of people moving out of the municipality and a lot of uninhabited housing (type 5 and type 6),
- high proportion of population with primary education – high unemployment – low spatial mobility (type 7)
- high birth rate – very high proportion of population with primary education and high unemployment (type 8).

"Declining municipalities" (type 9) are a specific type of settlement displaying decline – marginalisation in all areas under scrutiny (age, education, economic activity, housing, unemployment).

Municipalities with very complicated and unfavourable conditions of human potential and settlement conditions, characterised by the accumulation of various social obstacles to development are exclusively made up of rural municipalities which are mostly concentrated in certain territories (regions). It is the very cumulative nature of the problems and its concentration in the territory that pushes them into the trap of so-called cumulative circulating causality, which is difficult to back out of and which creates whole marginal territories. It is a sort of vicious circle, in which the influence of one factor (e.g. the position at the edge of a developing region, unemployment, low education of the population) strengthens others, which then cumulatively add up to create the stagnation or decline of a territory.

These municipalities with social obstacles (mainly rural municipalities) can be divided into two groups which differ fundamentally, where the decline in population is expressed in different ways. On the one hand, there are rural municipalities where there is a decline in the number of inhabitants, be it by emigration (type 6), low birth rate (type 5), a combination of a high proportion of the population of post-productive age and low birth rate (type 4) or a combination of all three factors (type 9). A falling population combined with unemployment creates a vicious circle leading to the depopulation of these territories. A fundamental factor which can trigger stagnation or decline can be the very absence of a development centre (large town centre); this hypothesis requires more detailed investigation.

Map 5: The spatial location of the social settlement types in Slovakia




*Source: Gajdoš, Moravanská, SU SAV*

On the other hand, there are rural municipalities where the population is growing (above all as a result of a high birth rate): these are settlement types 7 and 8. Nevertheless, these municipalities find themselves in a complicated socio-economic situation (high

unemployment rate combined with the poor education of the population and low economic activity). In these types of settlement, the problem of a higher representation of the Roma population comes to the fore, where there is an important statistical correlation between unemployment and a higher proportion of the population with primary education. Social decline has the nature of more complex socio-cultural exclusion, which in combination with socio-economic barriers creates once more a vicious circle of decline for municipalities and even whole regions. A fundamental factor which can be a trigger for further social problems in these municipalities can be the poor education of the population, which as an institutionalised type of cultural capital contributes to the reproduction of the low social positions of parents and their children.

In the case of rural settlements, the problem of the quality of human resources is becoming increasingly apparent. The opportunities for development of rural settlements are also under threat from the insufficient development of infrastructure and limited transport possibilities. The disadvantageous situation of this type of settlement increases their spatial, settlement and social marginalisation. The processes of suburbanisation have an impact on the transformation of only a part of Slovakia's rural settlement structure. The majority must deal with the fact that their endogenous development potential is often very limited and if they are situated in so-called problem regions, the development impact of exogenous factors is also limited. The fact that the regional economic infrastructure on which an important part of the rural workforce was focused was little-diversified contributed to the significant settlement and spatial settlement differentiation with an impact on these rural settlements.

The typological analyses presented here demonstrate that the social nature of settlement-regional disparities is growing in Slovakia. These interregional and inter-settlement differences are influenced by a set of potential (mainly human resources), infrastructural, civilisational and positional dispositions which increase – or reduce – their capacity to develop and their level of attraction. In the background to these differences, however, there is also a differentiation in the social and demographic structure, in the unemployment rate, and also in the conditions for social dynamics (individual, family), and the migration of the population which is

caused by the above. It can be seen that the differences in the living conditions, the advantages or disadvantages of a local or regional situation provide a significant stimulus for individual behaviour. Growing social differentiation is reflected in a growing stratification differentiation within settlement and territorial communities.

## Conclusions

The research deals with the development of Slovakia's socio-spatial situation as a process which reflects the turbulence of society's development changes. The specific features of its formation in historical contexts are briefly mentioned, but mainly in connection to the development of society's industrial and urban base. We deal more extensively with the period of pre-transformation (1930s-1980s) associated with the intensive advance of industrialisation and urbanisation, as well as the two stages of the period of transformation since 1990s, with an emphasis on describing the social, socio-economic and socio-spatial impacts of the processes at work during these periods on a macro-social and also at a regional and local level.

The development of Slovakia's socio-spatial situation has long been characterised by a whole range of specific features resulting from the nature of society, its economic basis, specific socio-cultural features and the type of settlement. Until the middle of the 20$^{th}$ century, Slovak society and its settlement sphere had a specific socio-demographic, cultural, economic, civilisational and urbanisation base. It was characterised by its mainly agrarian character and relatively great differences between areas at economic, cultural and social levels. It also stood out for the marked fragmentation of industrial locations, which was determined by the nature of industry, particularly its strong focus on the food and extraction industries, which did not require a large concentration of population and was supported by the traditionally dense settlement structure of small towns and villages. There was also a certain regional differentiation which gradually deepened with further industrialisation, as well as through the specific course of the process of urbanisation.

A characteristic feature of Slovakia's socio-economic development after 1989 is the high level of regional differentiation and polarisation, which is reflected in the "establishment" of a large

number of backward regions. The main reason for these disparities arising is the differences in the regions' capacities and opportunities for adapting to the new economic and social circumstances. Differentiated opportunities to adapt are often inherited from the period of pre-transformation and are also affected by the demands of the globalisation processes.

As a result of the spatially selective action of the transformation processes, society's newly-shaped socio-spatial differentiation lies at different spatial levels. We can identify its presence between regions, between urban and rural settlements as well as between settlements within these types of settlements.

Regional polarisation is clearly visible in several areas. Among the most important ones, we may mention large regional differences:

- in the unemployment rate,
- in the economic productivity of regions,
- in basic information, technical and transport infrastructure facilities,
- in the connection of regions to a large transport infrastructure and mainly to the metropolises of the country,
- in the level of education and in the social and demographic structure of the population of the regions. The expected result of this development is the trend of creating so-called marginal, or peripheral, regions for which a wide range of development barriers is typical.

During the first stage of the transformation period (1990s), regional differentiation took on marked spatial contours. A group of regions with relatively good potential and development capacities was clearly defined, just as more numerous groups of little-developed and marginal regions emerged. Regional typology shows that the great majority of developed or transitory regions are situated mainly in western Slovakia and in northern central Slovakia. The group of little-developed regions is in the south of central Slovakia and in eastern Slovakia.

It can be seen that the limitation of active regulatory opportunities for municipalities, regions, and the state during the period of globalisation can lead to the enforcement of trends of spatial and social segregation with all its consequences, from the intolerable migration of high-quality human resources into towns and developed regions, through the economic and social marginalisation

of certain groups of settlements or types of settlements, the concentration of poverty in certain settlements or territories etc. It is a kind of vicious circle in which the actions of one factor reinforce others and their effects are then cumulatively reflected in the stagnation or decline of a certain region or settlement.

Both the limitations of regional distribution policies, which led to a growth in differences between regions, and the growth of decentralisation leading to a growth in the importance of the endogenous economic, social and cultural capitals of individual regions and settlements, have played a role in the polarisation effect of the transformation changes in Slovakia's socio-spatial situation. This has been reflected in the great dynamic growth of the country capital, as well as of the regions of western Slovakia which had more favourable development potential, and in the detriment of the regions of central – and especially eastern – Slovakia, where little-urbanised and rural regions built on the settlement basis of small rural municipalities are more concentrated.

We have identified a similar differentiation trend at a settlement level, where the differences between town and village are widening, thus leading to a differentiation within these types of settlement. The differentiation concerns both human potential and conditions of settlement and living. The situation of settlements in developed and little-developed regions differs, while the influence of regional contexts on settlement development continues to exist. At settlement level, there is a more significant advance in the process of suburbanisation and suburban municipalities create a specific type of settlement, whose social characteristics of human potential, and social environment, are closer to the town than to the countryside.

The social typology of settlements pointed to the deepening typological differentiation of settlements and enabled a large number of municipalities with very complicated and unfavourable conditions of human potential and settlement conditions to be identified, characterised by the accumulation of several social obstacles to development. These are exclusively rural municipalities, whereas on the whole they are not isolated municipalities, but rather are concentrated in certain territories (regions).

Recently, the question of an appropriate or socially necessary level of regional differences has been addressed in Slovakia more and more urgently. Available knowledge has shown that too great differences can pose a threat to the stability of society in the social – and

later political – field. On the other hand, however, excessive efforts made to reduce regional differences can lead to a deceleration, or stagnation, in the socio-economic development of the whole country. The problem, however, is finding an appropriate level of difference in various spheres of regional availability, which relates to finding an answer to the question of whether regional development should aim for convergence or divergence. The sensitivity of Slovak society to the existence of regional differences is relatively low.

The state, as well as regions and settlements, much prefer short-term, mainly economic, activities and effects compared to more long-term development projects, which is understandable in a situation where there is a significant lack of finances for settlement and territorial self-government, but on the other hand this often complicates the social and ecological situation of the territories, as well as the opportunities for achieving more long-term development projects. Sufficient space is not created for more significant respect for and development of the specific features of actual settlements or regions; there is usually an effort made for some kind of universal approach and solution, particularly at a regional level (the situation is better at settlement level).

The situation was complicated by the unclear definition of regions which required supporting measures (the criteria frequently change, or there was no serious analysis of a more complex and multi-dimensional definition and indication of the sources of their problematic nature). Too much focus on economic criteria to define these regions did not allow for sufficient consideration of the significance of human factors, as well as for the social, socio-cultural and historical layers of the problems behind problematic regions. The social reality of our regions is very differentiated and the standard solutions applied are not sensitive enough to Slovakia's important socio-cultural diversity, particularly in problem areas. The result is the low efficiency of financial means to aid problematic regions.

During the transformation process, the social structure of regions also underwent a radical differentiation change, mainly as a result of changes in ownership relations. The diversity of the social structure of regions is distorted by the large disparities in the distribution of jobs, financial, social, human, social and cultural capital. In backward regions, there is an accumulation of this lack of capital and the whole region enters a situation of socio-

economic exclusion and marginalisation. The social structure of these regions is strongly influenced by a high level of unemployment, resulting in a lower quality of life.

It has been shown that the territories where current economic problems meet a low quality of human potential find themselves in a difficult situation, which has complicated even further the stabilisation of better-quality human potential which the territory had until recently. The static nature and poor prospect for a change to this situation has a demotivating, fatalistic effect and a negative impact on the territory's social and cultural capital. On top of this, it creates a sort of awareness of the unfavourable situation and lack of interest in the human resources of these territories, which has a whole range of negative social, psychological and other impacts.

The complexity of the current situation lies in the existence of several serious risks which make solving regional disparities a complicated and difficult process. The basic framework is determined by the existence of a significant number of highly marginalised regions and sub-regions in Slovakia. This is linked for example to the risks of deepening regional disparities regarding the quality of human potential, the risk of increasing regional and sub-regional disparities considering the quality of the living environment, as well as infrastructural qualities and the risk of deepening the differentiated level of readiness (human and specialist) for carrying out regional policies, both internal and multi-national, in order to increase differences in competitiveness, and to create conditions for a quality life, building a knowledge society etc.

There is a growth in the significance of the local level and inter-settlement relations, as well as an increased impact of the regional level on the local level. The extent and scope of problems involving inter-regional and inter-settlement cooperation is also changing greatly. A fundamental factor in this process is the growing importance of the self-government of settlements and associations of municipalities within a micro-region or region, and the activities of regional self-government. It has been confirmed that there is an increase in the number of settlements which have understood the significance of mutual cooperation, and recently in particular settlements have been joining together in various settlement and micro-regional groups to create more suitable conditions for the existence and development of smaller municipalities, and to take advantage of endogenous sources of development.

# PART II.

# SOCIAL-SPATIAL POLARISATION MECHANISMS IN THE EAST-CENTRAL EUROPEAN NEW TOWN REGIONS

## THE CASE STUDIES

# Social Polarisation in Tatabánya and its Region

Júlia Schuchmann

## Introduction

Tatabánya is the Central Transdanubian region's second most populous town of county rank, with a population of 67,000 in 2013. The largest city in the region is Székesfehérvár with more than 100 thousand inhabitants (100,570 people). The location transportation geography of Tatabánya and its urban area is excellent. Its distance from the Slovakian and Austrian border is 50 and 100 kilometres, respectively. It lies 70 kilometres away from Budapest.

Tatabánya is situated along the Pan-European Transport corridor connecting Berlin with Istanbul and Venice with Lvov. Part of the corridor is the M1 motorway that links Vienna with Budapest. It is accessible not only through express road but also via rail, which is also an international line, namely an express line from Budapest to Vienna and Munich. Tatabánya's geographical location is unique among Hungarian new towns because Budapest's attraction can be strongly felt here (in terms of economy, labour market, and culture).

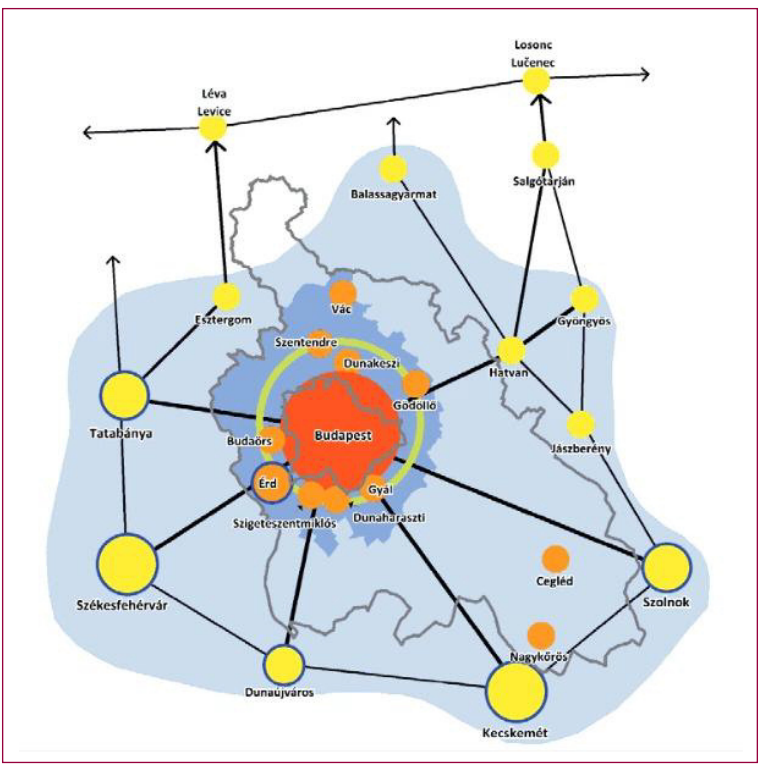
The town has tight functional connections with the capital. These ties appear in the commuting characteristics of Tatabánya residents, in economic relationships, and in the utilisation of the capital's cultural and commercial services. Tatabánya is an important sub-centre of the Budapest metropolitan area that has its

The study has been realised within the confines of the research entitled "Social Polarisation in the Hungarian and Eastern-Central European 'New Town' Regions: Impacts of Transition and Globalisation" (K 106169), funded by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office.

own spatial organisation functions as well. According to the National Spatial Development Concept created for the development period between 2014 and 2020, Tatabánya is a member of the Budapest metropolitan area's urban network which transcends administrative boundaries *(see Map 6)*.

According to development documents (such as the National Regional Development Plan, and the National Development Plan 2020), relations between the capital and its urban region (including Tatabánya) are no longer bilateral (existing between the capital and surrounding settlements), but are tending towards networking, which means an increase in economic, service and cooperative relationships among settlements surrounding the centre. In the light of this, the joint planning and development of the capital and its urban area is increasingly justified, especially in case of transportation and economic development issues. How successful this

Map 6: Tatabánya's relative location to Budapest




*Source: National Development 2020 National Development Concept, p. 202.*

will be in the future is going to be decisive for Tatabánya and its urban region, as currently its proximity to the capital often manifests as a disadvantage, especially with the brain drain it exerts on skilled workers; although that is also caused by local deficiencies, such as the low number and quality of local job opportunities.

The basis for the development of Tatabánya and its urban region was coal mining and the heavy industry (aluminium and steel production) built upon it. Of the factors supporting industrialisation we must highlight the area's abundance of minerals and natural resources (brown coal, bauxite, limestone). In addition to coal, an important factor in favour of industrialisation was the presence of underwater springs and water bodies (such as the Öreg-tó ["old lake"] in Tata). All of these conditions created a favourable basis for the establishment of heavy industry. The first mine was opened in 1896 (which involved English capital). Thanks to the profitability of coal extraction, by 1902 Tatabánya had already managed to transform from a mining site to an independent settlement. During World War II the mines and their associated facilities were spared from destruction (due in part to military and security reasons), leading to the former mining settlement becoming one of the country's largest centres for heavy industry. Tatabánya was elevated to town status in 1947, and to the status of town of county rank in 1950. With the prosperity of mining and cement production came the opening of new mining sites. By the mid-1950s Tatabánya's coal production satisfied two thirds of the country's demand for coal.

The 1960s and 70s brought another wave of the town's development. At this time new investments in heavy industry and the expansion of existing industrial capacities (such as the announcement of the Eocene Programme, and the 1965 opening of the Márkushegy mining operation) once again brought the town a strong demand for labour, which the government then solved with bringing people to Tatabánya from the country's other regions. The increase in population required housing and infrastructure. In the 1960s large housing estates were built for several thousand people using then-current prefabricated block technology. At that time the coal mines were employing nearly 17,000 people. While in 1950 the city had 40,000 residents in 1980 it was home to 75,000 people who lived here. Tatabánya and its urban region faced new challenges with the gradual depletion of carbon stocks

starting in the mid-1980s. The increasingly expensive and inefficient mining eventually led to the mine's closure in 1987. After the closure, the mines in Oroszlány and the ones still operating in Tatabánya (e.g. the Márkushegy mines) were incorporated into Vértesi Erőmű Zrt[1].

The sharp decline in coal mining and heavy industry activity, and the related social crisis (unemployment) stopped the town's development for a while. The previous population growth was halted and the number of inhabitants started to dwindle as the previously positive migration balance shifted to the negative. Halted construction projects and shrinking job opportunities forced many people to return their original place of residence which they originally left for the enticing prospects here.

## The specificities of the transition period

The years of the political transition, the adoption of market economy and global effects had a different impact on Central Eastern European post-socialist industrial towns. One reason for this is their unique history of social and economic development *(Szymanska, 2005)*. Another one is the higher vulnerability of socialist industrial towns and their urban regions, since their economy of such a town was built almost completely on a state-owned large enterprise and was dependent on its performance and problems. Strong dependence on the public sector meant that a successful transition from a planned economy to a market-based one was dependent on the presence of the state.

In case of Hungarian new towns two models emerged. One was the "shock therapy" model, which involves the sudden and quick "retreat" of the state, mostly without a concept for handling the

[1] Vértesi Erőmű Zrt. is the most important power-generating thermal power plant of the Transdanubian Tatabánya and the nearby Oroszlány, which owes its existence to coal mining. The thermal power plant has both gas and coal-fuelled units. Coal was mined in the nearby Márkushegy coal mines owned by the power plant, which were operating until 2015. Due to tightening EU environmental standards, coal-based power generation had to be shut down, which led to the loss of 400 jobs in the area. Units fuelled by gas are planned to be built until 2020. The power plant currently has more than 1300 employees, making it one of the region's major employers.

economic and social tensions that were expected to arise after the privatisation of state-owned large enterprises. These towns (such as Ózd) have been struggling with severe structural problems ever since: high levels of unemployment and an increasingly accelerating exodus of the population. In new towns belonging to the other (successful) model the presence of the state and state property did not vanish but only gradually reduced, while state intervention still remained in some form (either during the privatisation process or when old business real estate was sold). Research shows that these new towns were able to successfully integrate into the global economy. *(Enyedi, 1998; Węcławowicz, 1998; Szirmai et al, 2013)*. This other, more successful model also characterised Dunaújváros and Tatabánya, which towns are also analysed in this book.

In Tatabánya the disintegration of socialist heavy industry was gradual and only ended in the mid-2000s. For instance, coal production in the Márkushegy mines owned by the Vértes thermal power plant continued until 2015 when it was closed due to tightening EU environmental standards. Closing the mines and shutting down coal-based energy production ended the employment of 400 people from the area (including Tatabánya). Signs of the crisis were apparent in the early 1980s with mining becoming unprofitable and the cement plant being shut down in 1986. The crisis was further deepened by environmental pollution, decaying abandoned mining facilities,[2] a unilaterally skilled labour force, the complete lack of institutions of higher education, and the increasing costs of maintaining the institutional network and infrastructure built in welfare socialism, which fell on the local government.

Thanks to government subsidies (spent on the severance pay and equitable retirement of former miners and cement plant workers, and the rehabilitation of abandoned factory buildings) the town's economy did not collapse at once after the political transition, and social problems did not fall on the local government all at once. Nevertheless, damages were still considerable. The almost complete shutdown of heavy industry production led to the disappearance of more than 13 000 jobs until the mid-1990s. If we also include affected family members then the future

[2] The utilisation of former mining buildings is still a problem for the town.

of approximately 40 thousand people became uncertain in the town. According to one urban professional, "the closure of the mines had an effect on nearly every family on some level. That is why we could not speak of a depression localised to certain neighbourhoods, since it affected the entirety of the town." The most vulnerable groups were not the miners who lost their jobs in their retirement age, as they received reasonable severances and large miners' pensions (due to which their monthly income is still often higher than that of private sector employees). The crisis and unemployment, and the risk of marginalisation mostly affected those who worked in so-called service industries related to the mines (such as repair shops). The latter experienced a significant drop in their monthly income.

Unemployed people were also at risk of not finding jobs at the mostly foreign-owned companies that were being established in the town from the mid-1990s onwards, as they required more modern, or more specialised skills, or even language skills, which these people did not possess, or were too old to be retrained or to further their education. However, a smaller group could benefit from the early years of the transition, especially those who started their own businesses (mechanicians and mechatronics specialists), providing special services required by the growing number of multinational companies that were establishing themselves here.

### *Features of economic restructuring*

Tatabánya and its region were relatively successful in their economic restructuring and quick integration into global economic processes. This was due to the simultaneous presence of several favourable factors. One of the most important of these was its favourable location. Since it was close to the capital, its excellent accessibility soon attracted the attention of foreign capital[3]. The town's geographical location undoubtedly helped it to more quickly recover from the crisis emerging in the early 1990s but this alone

[3] Of all post-socialist countries, in the early 1990s most foreign direct investment (FDI) flowed to Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary. In the country, working capital was mostly concentrated in Budapest and its agglomeration, followed by some Transdanubian cities with strong traditional economic foundations, and into the towns of regions with good accessibility.

would have not been enough had it not been paired with conscious crisis management and economic development policies. A good counter-example here is the new town Várpalota in Western Transdanubia, which is also situated near a motorway but its economy was unable to restructure itself and it has since been struggling with a severe structural crisis *(Szirmai, 2013, p. 21.)*.[5] In addition to the location's good accessibility, multinational companies are also attracted to the local pool of relatively cheap workers who nevertheless are highly skilled and have a good work ethic. Thanks to these characteristics, the Central Transdanubian Region realised the third largest per capita foreign investment (after the Central and Western Hungarian regions). In 2008 64% of incoming foreign direct investment was concentrated in the Central Hungarian Region with Budapest at its centre, 13% in the Western Transdanubian Region, and 11% in the Central Transdanubian Region. In 2013 the concentration of foreign capital continued to strengthen in Budapest and the western regions, with 18% directed to the Central Transdanubian Region *(CSO, 2013)*.

Good accessibility alone would not have been enough for a structural change in the economy had it not been accompanied by an active development policy by the town's administration. Back then, instead of drifting along with current events, Tatabánya's administration, in cooperation with a Canadian crisis management company, created Tatabánya's long-term economic development strategy, a key element of which was the creation of a modern industrial park[4]. As a first step, the local government created an Organisation for Economic Development (which they still own), whose task is to make the town and its industrial park more attractive to foreign investors[5].

So far the Industrial Park has created some 6,000 jobs for the town and its area. The first establishment in the Industrial Park was

[4] Ipari park (Industrial Park): is an area zoned and planned for the purpose of industrial development. Industrial parks are usually located on the edges of, or outside the main residential area of a city, and normally have good transportation access, including road and rail. In 2011 179 industrial parks operated in Hungary.

[5] The town offered significant tax discounts and even tax exemption to companies with an annual income below 5 million HUF. Companies with a turnover of over 100 million HUF were granted a 5% tax discount.

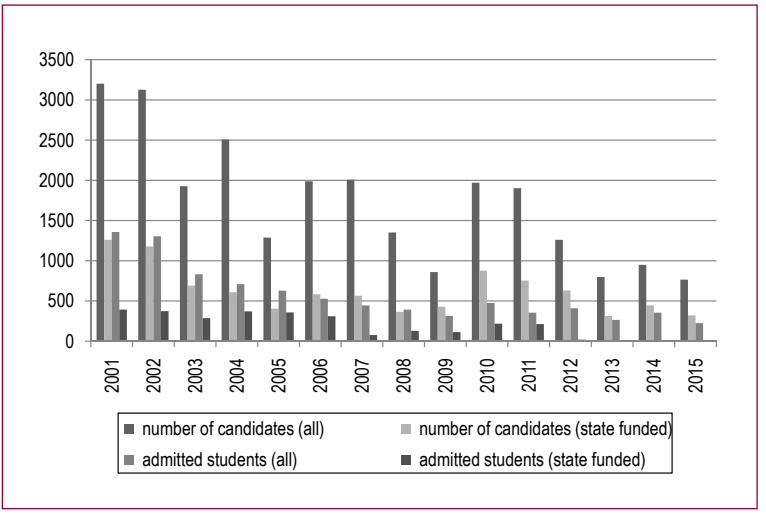
an American wheel rim manufacturer, followed by many others afterwards. Empirical research shows that the reason these companies chose Tatabánya and its area, in addition to the previously mentioned logistical advantages, infrastructural endowments, higher level public services and skilled labour force, there were also subjective reasons such as good relations with the local government and swift administration *(Szirmai et al, 2002, p.74.)*. Currently there are companies from 25 different nationalities here (American, German, Japanese, Austrian, Hungarian) operating mostly in globally competitive market sectors (such as microelectronics, mechanics, medical devices, the chemical industry, etc.). One can also find here larger multinational companies such as Grundfos and Henkel. In 2001 the Industrial Park underwent an expansion to create additional capacity for further companies. The town consciously sought to attract companies that are competitive in the global market. Having learnt from the disadvantages of a monocentric economic structure, they also sought to have the town's economy stand on multiple legs *(see Table 7)*. Since the 2008 crisis no new company has come to the town, while there is still room for new ones. The town had applied for the establishment of the Mercedes factory which in the end was built in Kecskemét. Tatabánya puts great emphasis on developing the industrial park's infrastructure and make it most attractive to foreign investors.

In addition to the establishment of the industrial park in the city the foundation of the Modern Business Studies (today Edutus) College in 1992 was an important moment from the viewpoint of the town's development. It was hoped that the town will expand its regional role; its population retaining power will improve and will create a social environment and innovative milieu more attractive to economic operators.

Launching joint (dual) training programmes with local companies has been the college's priority for several years. However, the surveyed local entrepreneurs believe that the structure of the college's training programme still cannot match the labour demands of local entrepreneurs. There is a dominance of economics courses, even though more technical training is needed.

The college has been in a very strong competition for students with other higher education institutions (e.g. College of Dunaújváros) in the region but it is mostly the capital city's supply of higher education is what it can hardly compete with. Over the past

Figure 7: The number of applicant and admitted college students at Edutus College (State funded and fee-paying) (2001-2015) (people)




*Source: The author's own edition based on the data of Eduline*

fifteen years, the number of college students steadily declined, and after 2010 and the termination of publicly-funded training courses this trend fell even further.

### *Employment, commuting, unemployment rate*

The employment rates of Tatabánya have changed over the last twenty-five years. On the one hand, following the economic restructuring and the development of market economy the employment rate fell temporarily, on the other hand, it has been restructured. The former mainly functional structure of an economy based on heavy industry and monofunctional economy – thanks to the town's economic development strategy – has been replaced by a diversified suburban zone economy. This is well illustrated by the fact that employment share in the industrial sector declined, while it increased in the service and commercial sectors. While the employment share in industry was 62% in 1980, this ratio by 1990 dropped to 5% (due to the mass termination of the heavy industrial companies). New industrial sectors appeared in the town, so the proportion of workers employed in electronics, manufacturing or in chemical industry is significant today.

Nonetheless, in 2011 the proportion of workers employed in industry in Tatabánya (38%) was still higher than the national average, which was 23%.

The improvement in employment between 2001 and 2011 is mainly due to the new multinational companies settling in the city. Between 2001 and 2011 a total of seven large, foreign-owned companies, employing hundreds of people, settled in the industrial park. Among them were large employers such as AGC, the Japanese automotive company or Samsung or Henkel *(see Table 7)*.

Tatabánya's favourable employment indicators are due to the proximity of the capital city, because those who cannot find a job locally commute to Budapest. The residents of Tatabánya and its urban area have always been characterised by commuting as Tatabánya is located in the labour market catchment area of several regional scope cities (including the capital city, but also Győr and Komárom. The destination of commuting is Budapest, the capital city, in the highest proportion, Győr is the second in rank and Komárno, located on the Slovakian side, can also be mentioned.

The results of the previously mentioned empirical record show differences in the proportion of commuters commuting from the

Table 7: The most important companies of Tatabánya settled in the Industrial Park between 1995-2011

| Company name | Activity | Nationality | Year of settlement |
|---|---|---|---|
| **OTTO FUCHS Hungary** | aluminium wheel rims manufacturing | German | 1995 |
| **Grundfos Magyarország Gyártó kft.** | pumps manufacturing | Danish | 1999 |
| **FCI Connector Kft** | electronic plugs and sockets manufacturing | French | 1999 |
| **Coloplast Hungary Kft** | car glass manufacturing | Japanese | 2005 |
| **AGC Autóipar Magyarország Kft.** | plasters | Danish | 2005 |
| **Samsung Chemical** | plastic raw material production | South-Korean | 2006 |
| **HENKEL** | adhesives production | German | 2011 |

*Source: Tatabánya Industrial Park (iph.hu)*

different urban zones of Tatabánya. People living in the city centre (13%) and in the residential areas of higher status around the city centre (13.7%) do commute at above the city average (12%) ratio. The citizens living in gated communities commute in the highest proportion (15%). Presumably, the reason for this is that the higher professional status or higher job position and income groups in comparison to the average in Tatabánya live here (see more details on this later).

The surrounding communities also benefited from Tatabánya's attractiveness, especially Környe administratively bordered by the town, where the settling firms were also expected by favourable infrastructure and fiscal conditions (the Japanese Briston glass factory for example, settled in Környe). This resulted in a competition and some conflict between the leaders of Tatabánya and Környe but finally, the two settlements have agreed in a compromise solution (proportional distribution of business tax).

One of the professionals living and working in the town who was interviewed said: "Today in Tatabánya it is just those people do not work, who do not want to." However, this does not mean that the problem of unemployment would have been eliminated in the town, especially among the less educated. Changes in the unemployment rate over the last twenty-five years followed the national trends, but always remained higher than that. The unemployment rate right after the transition (1990-1995) rose to its historical top (in the country as well), with a rate fluctuating between 12-14%. Then the unemployment rate dramatically dropped from 1996 onwards, which can clearly be linked to the establishment of the industrial park in 1996. The unemployment rate in the middle of the 2000s began to noticeably increase (as the effect of the 2008 economic crisis), and reached its peak (10%) in 2011. Then it began to decline again in 2011, which may be associated with the dynamic development of the local economy and the emergence of new companies, and company sites (e.g. Henkel, Samsung) *(see Figure 8)*.

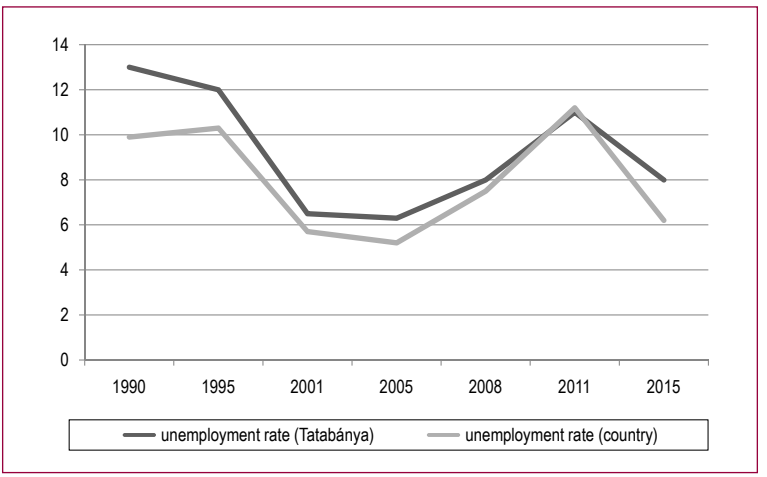
The stable operation of local economy is indicated by the fact that 14% of the total surveyed respondents living in Tatabánya urban area claimed to be very afraid of losing their jobs, but more than half of the respondents, 59%, were not afraid at all (32%) or only moderately (17%) of losing their job.

In the total sample the rate of those who are very much afraid of losing their jobs is higher, 16%. Comparing the level of public satis-

faction with local job opportunities, it can be concluded that citizens living in Tatabánya urban region declared themselves to be more satisfied than the surveyed respondents living in other new towns.

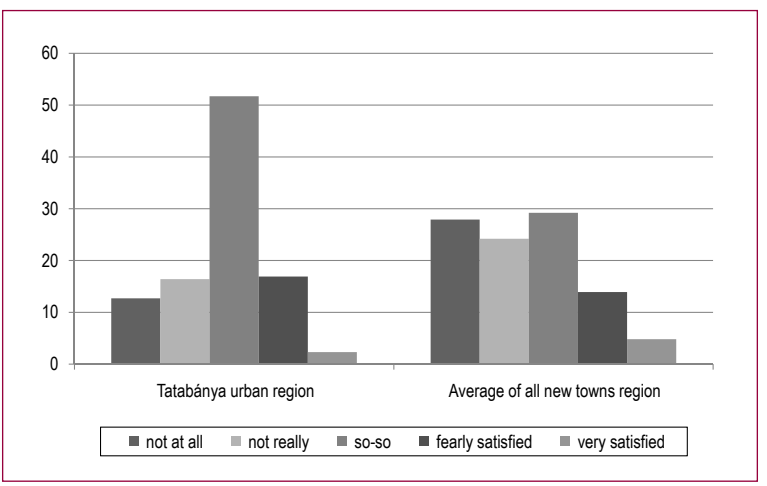
The proportion of those rather pleased with local employment opportunities is 17% in Tatabánya urban region, while the average

Figure 8: Changes in the unemployment rate in the country and Tatabánya between 1990 and 2015 (%)




*Source: The author's own edition based on CSO data*

Figure 9: The satisfaction rate with local employment opportunities in Tatabánya's region and other new towns regions, 2015 (%)




*Source: Hungarian Scientific Research Fund survey results, 2015*

of the sample in this matter is 13%. In Tatabánya urban area the rate of citizens moderately satisfied with local employment opportunities reached 51%, while the average of new towns urban regions is 29.2% *(see Figure 9)*.

## The main trends of socio-spatial polarisation

### *Demographic and social characteristics*

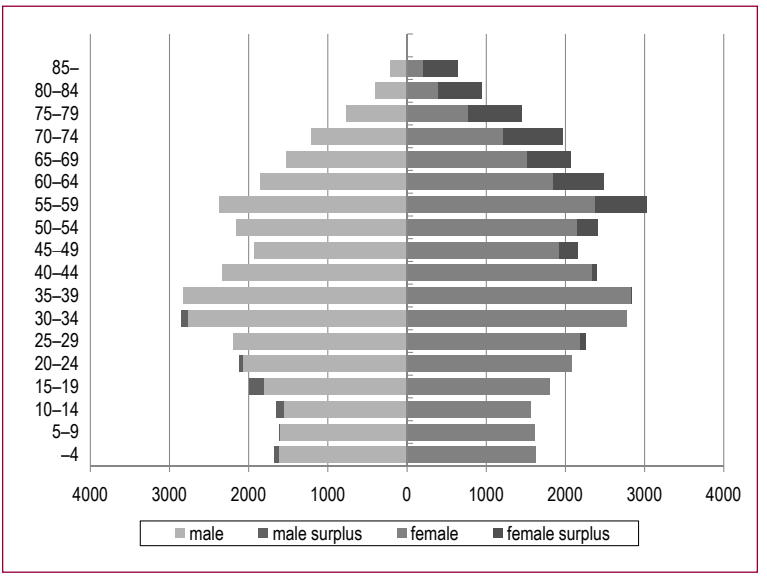
Over the past twenty-five years the demographic and social conditions of Tatabánya and its region have changed. The earlier demographic structure, typical of a socialist industrial town, namely the surplus of male population, the younger age structure and the positive migration balance has changed. Today Tatabanya hardly meets these formerly new town's criteria. The 2011 census data and Tatabánya city's population pyramid show a picture of an ageing local population, where the proportion of children and juvenile age people is significantly lower than the proportion of the elderly generation within the total population.

The regime change has brought a revolution in the number of urban population. While until 1990 the number of urban population steadily increased, after 1990, this growth turned into a decline. Between 1990 and 2013, the population of the town of Tatabánya decreased from 72 thousand to 67 thousand. At the same time, in the town's neighbourhood settlements the population decline was much more moderate *(Figure 11)*.

The steady decline of birth rate also contributed to the decrease in the population. According to the last three censuses the ratio of 14-year olds in Tatabánya decreased, while the proportion of elderly people increased the most. The ageing index also confirms this. While in 2001, the number of elderly (over the age of 65 years) was 80 per 100 juvenile (under 14 years), this figure was 87 in 2011, and 118 (!) in 2014.

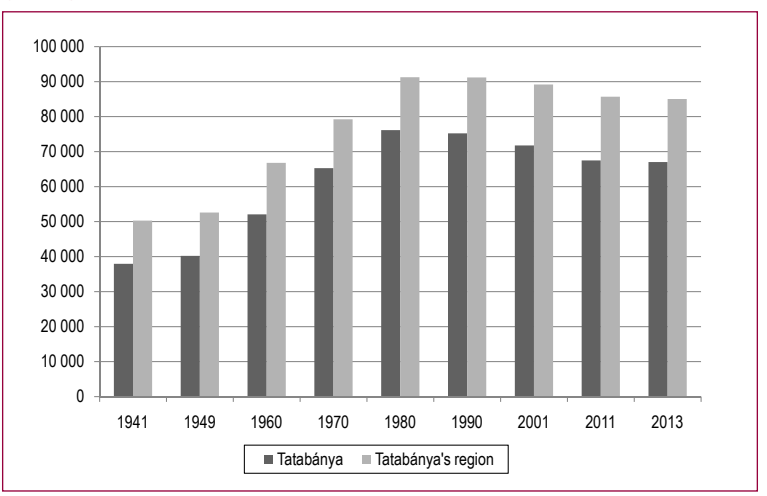
The population decline, is only partly to blame for the low birth rate level, it can rather be explained by the years of negative migration difference. Although in recent times, a number of multinational enterprises settled in the town and in the region creating new jobs and services, but this could not offset the continued population decline in the city and its surroundings.

Figure 10: The distribution of the population pyramid of Tatabánya by gender 2011 (people)




*Source: The author's own edition on the basis of CSO data*

Figure 11: Population change in Tatabánya and its region between 1941 and 2013 (people)



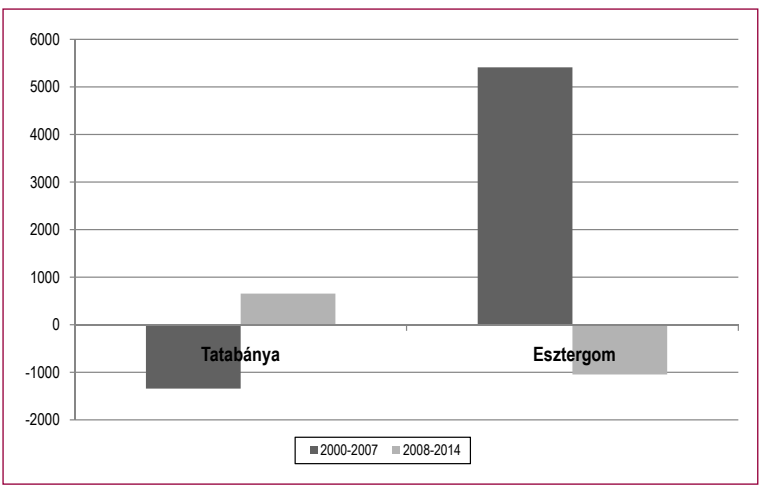

*Source: The author's own edition on the basis of CSO data*

However, if the process of migration balance is divided into two periods (pre- and post-economic crisis period) and compared to the county seat and at the same time a traditional town,

Esztergom[6], the net migration data, the characteristics and the new trends can be observed *(see Figure 12)*.

On the one hand it appears that in the pre-crisis years, 2000-2007, while there was a major exodus in Tatabánya, Esztergom had a positive migration balance. This trend since 2008 seems to turn around. After 2008 the dynamics of migration slowed down in Tatabánya and a positive migration balance was observed, while in Esztergom the previous positive migration balance turned into negative. Among the reasons may be mentioned that Suzuki Esztergom, one of Hungary's largest car manufacturers, employed nearly 6,000 people in the city and the surrounding areas but it attracts labour even from the Slovak side of the border. The economic crisis particularly seriously hit the car industry and car companies such as Suzuki too. In 2008-2009, the factory was forced to lay off nearly 1200 of its workers. The town was hit by the crisis very heavily, because 30% of the town's total business tax revenues came from Suzuki.

Figure 12: The migration balance of Tatabánya and of Esztergom, between 2000-2007 and 2008-2014 (people)




*Source: The author's own edition on the basis of CSO data*

[6] After Esztergom, Tatabánya is the second most populous city of Komárom-Esztergom county, whose old county seat is a religious centre, the headquarters of Suzuki Hungary factory, the Japanese car manufacturer, has been operating here since 1998. According to 2011 census data, the population of Esztergom was 29,000 people.

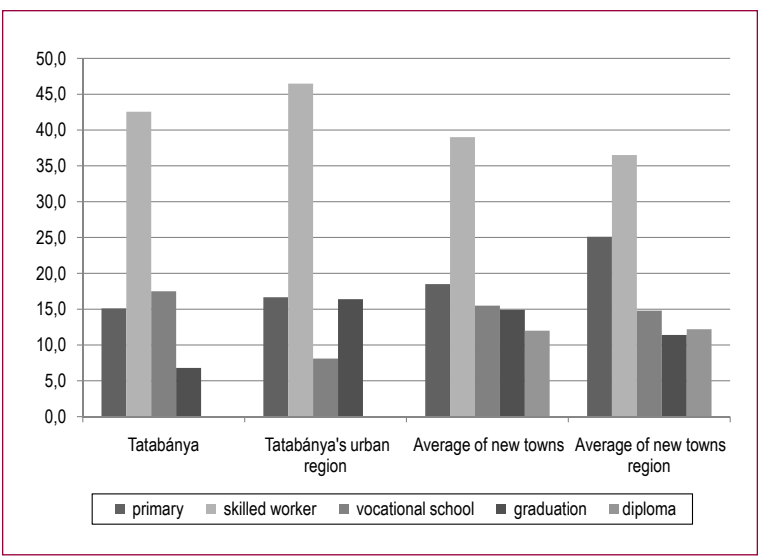
In Tatabánya there were no similar to Esztergom scale layoffs, in fact, after 2008 a new IT company settled in the industrial park, and of the existing companies some were developing and some expanded their capacity. Presumably, it also helped to slow down the dynamics of the outmigration from the town.

## *Qualification characteristics*

Tatabánya's industrial workers' town character even in the 21st century has survived in part, as it is reflected by the qualification characteristics of the population. Although the proportion of graduates – similarly to national trends – increased between the two censuses in the town (this is partly due to the operation of the local college as well) their share is still below the national or regional average.

In contrast, the ratio of people with professional qualifications is higher. According to the empirical results of a representative survey for 11 new Hungarian towns and their urban regions, the proportion of skilled workers in Tatabánya urban region (46.5%) is exceeding the average of the sample (36%) significantly.

Figure 13: The qualification data of the population in Tatabánya, and in the new towns' urban regions, 2015, (%)




*Source: Hungarian Scientific Research Fund survey results, 2015*

## *Socio-spatial inequalities*

As a consequence of global urbanisation, during the last two decades in East-Central European regions, including urban areas, social spatial inequalities increased: social disparities between cities and their surroundings became stronger *(Szirmai et al, 2005; 2014; Kubes, 2013)*.

In Tatabánya and its urban region the spatial separation of the residential area of different social status groups was already typical even in the 1950s. One reason for this is that Tatabánya is a "mosaic" city. Tatabánya's urban structure is different from the rest of the new towns, as it has grown into a town not from a village centre; housing estates were built not around it as in the case of Dunaújváros. But previously built housing estates, family home neighbourhoods or more recently built gated communities were built amidst physically separated settlement districts. All this had an impact on the town's and its urban area's territorial social inequalities. This is because different social status groups moved into the different parts of the municipality with different urban ecological conditions. The state-socialist housing allocation mechanisms resulted in intensified territorial separation; different studies found a correlation between the social structure of the housing estates' population and the ecological conditions of residential neighbourhoods not only in Hungary but in Tatabánya as well. *(Csanády et al, 2011)*.

This means that in better positioned housing estates higher proportion of apartments were given to higher status groups, while lower-status groups could move in their new home in lower quality housing estates. In Tatabánya's housing estates built in different decades, positioned under different urban ecological conditions, people of different social status set their homes. The managers of the local municipality, the Board of Directors members of state enterprises and mines and their families were housed in the town centre built in the 1950s and 1960s, in the residential houses equipped by modern conveniences and highest technology by the standards of the contemporary architectural technology. Of the higher status citizens several had already had a rural family home or cottage at that time in the town's suburban zone or at the foot of Vértes Mountains in villages with favourable natural and living environment or at the nearby Tatai Lake.

Parallel with the prestigious residential areas and suburban settlements, the urban neighbourhoods and housing estates inhabited by lower-status groups (the lower strata of miners' society) have always been present. A good example in Tatabanya is the neighbourhoods inhabited by cement workers and colliers that already at the time of their completion had been separated both physically and in their societies from the other parts of the town. These neighbourhoods were considered unhealthy even at the time of their construction, due to the close proximity of the cement plants. In Tatabánya due to a further deterioration of these parts of the town (e.g. Mésztelep, Hatos telep) segregated areas have evolved.

The extreme examples of social polarisation in Tatabánya can be observed in relatively easily definable small segregated areas inhabited by socially handicapped groups being in seriously disadvantaged position in every respect. The borders of the town's segregated areas were marked by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office for the first time in 2011, according to the 2011 census data. Based on the demarcation, those areas should be regarded as segregated, where the proportion of unemployed in the working-age population is more than 50% and the ratio of inhabitants with maximum primary school attainment also exceeds 50%.

On the basis of this definition, three smaller neighborhoods in the town can be regarded as segregated areas (see map). A common feature of these segregated areas is their relatively distant (approx. 7 km) location from to the city centre and their separation from the rest of the town by physical barriers (highway, railway). 2.6% of the town's total population live in the three segregated areas, this is 1800 people. Currently more than 60% of households living in segregated areas have no jobs. According to the CSO data the proportion of homes without comfort in Tatabánya's segregated areas is more than two-thirds, while their share in the whole town is 4%. Today's segregated areas are not the results of economic and social changes of the past twenty years; they had been formed much earlier.

The present run-down parts of the town have largely carried the risk of social and physical deterioration even during their build-up (the early 1930s) as they were far away from the city centre with poor access and in low housing quality.

Map 7: The segregated areas of Tatabánya


*Source: Integrated Urban Development Strategy of the City of Tatabánya, 2015*

These houses have been built typically for colliers in single-story no comfort buildings of six flats, with one room and a kitchen. Just because their unhealthy living environment their demolition was proposed even in the 1940s. However, when in the 1950s and 60s when the construction of new housing estates started in other parts of the town, the plan of the final liquidation of these slum quarters was finally given up.

Simultaneously, most of the wealthy mining families and working class families moved to one of the town's newly constructed residential areas, where they had been granted housing estate apartments that were modern and equipped with all the comforts of that time. These emptying and abandoned slum quarters in an increasing proportion were populated by low-status families and minorities coming from further parts of the country which were typically underdeveloped regions hit by social and economic problems.

After 1990 the segregated areas' social and physical degradation accelerated. The existing problems were exacerbated by the fact that the town's public utilities providers and the urban social welfare system gradually abandoned these parts of the town. With

this step the town has essentially postponed[7] and preserved the problem of segregated areas. The problem is so serious that the city administration has been trying for a decade to solve the problems of segregated areas.

At present, the town's municipal authorities are working together with the Maltese Charity Service[8] to mitigate poverty and exclusion (not only in segregated areas but in residential communities living in the most run-down multi-storey blocks of flats). Together with the local government with the help of social workers in the areas concerned, a continuous work is ongoing, with the active involvement of stakeholders for finding socially sustainable solutions. The government anti-segregation program covers the field of education as well, i.e. assistance in providing the conditions for educating the children of seriously disadvantaged families. The legal regulation of this issue was passed by the local municipality in 2010.

Over the years, the municipality worked out several "scenarios" to eliminate segregated areas. According to one version, these slum quarters should completely be terminated, the people who live there should be placed in residential apartments built at a fairer place. The other version suggests another liquidation possibility for the people living in segregated areas is placing them dispersedly into different parts of the town. Building rental apartments owned by the local government[9] of which approximately 20% would be allocated for social housing purposes could be another solution for the municipality for the future.

The third version would move these people to a concentrated place, such as a housing estate. But the reality is that so far, in this issue the town's management has never succeeded to find a solution, and as a municipal expert put it: "As we see the future deve-

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7 The fact that the problems of these disadvantaged urban parts and of those living in extreme poverty still, has not been resolved, can partly be explained by the "less visibility" of their presence.

8 The first concrete joint work of this type started in 2013. Its aim is to help families trapped in utility debt. As a part of this collaboration with the electricity power company itself, the so-called "pre-paid metering devices were placed for families with payment problems. The local government is transforming its aid program, which in this way will be more sensitive to debt problems. Respectively from its owned property the local government provided homes for the families in need of them.

9 In Hungary, the proportion of homes owned by local governments is negligible, less than 5%, the same rate in Western Europe, in Germany is around 10%.

lopment plans of the present government, I do not think that any of these scenarios will come true. It is much more possible that these run-down slums will "wear out". But it might take decades, which also means "the presence of unresolved problems".

The interviewed local experts said that the town's society clearly polarised in recent decades. The town's mosaic social structure characterised by differing social composition in the different parts of the city has still been preserved, which seems to be maintained in the future as well. The results of the empirical survey also show a picture of a socially polarised town. The demographic and social conditions of local citizens living in the urban region of various urban ecological circumstances show diversity.

The town centre has a higher proportion of older age groups (over 65 years) (23%) as well as the family home zone of the formerly village area (18.8%). The older age structure of the town centre and its surrounding districts is verified by the fact that these neighbourhoods have the highest proportion of those who moved to their current place of residence the earliest of all. In higher-status housing estates the proportion of older age groups is higher (20%), while it is lower (13%) in low-status housing estates. The primary reason for this (as it has been written above) is the real estate market prices. The young people who want to remain in the city, or even for young families moving into a new flat, the only affordable property type is currently the panel house. The rate of children aged (0-14 years) is excessively high in this otherwise ageing town, in segregated areas and slums, due to the local inhabitants' higher fertility rate, or to the regrettable fact that by the mortality indicators these districts are by several degrees worse than the other parts of the town.

The proportion of people suffering from long-term disease is higher in low-status and at the same time ageing urban areas. While among respondents living in low status housing estates 16% suffer from a long-term (chronic) disease, this ratio among high-status people living in housing complexes is only 9%. A good indication of social polarisation is the location of people with high educational attainment within the town as well. The ratio of graduates is varying in the town's different zones[10].

[10] The research has distinguished a total of 13 urban zones. A detailed explanation can be found in the research methods part.

The survey results show that a higher proportion of graduates surveyed are present in newly built gated community areas (16%) and high status suburban zones (14%). Their proportion is lower in the city centre (11.8%), in the low (10.1%) and in the high-status housing estates (10.9%). This suggests that the people with higher level of educational attainment moved out to the town's suburban, family housing zones.

The tensions resulting from socio-spatial inequalities – by the opinion of the town's surveyed decision-makers – despite the above-described facts are "not significant". This was explained by the fact that the new higher-status neighbourhoods (gated community developments, see for example Panorama gated community) that have been built in the last ten years, have rather "lifted up the surrounding residential areas," than caused problems. However, the positive effects of gated community developments are not seen by all the professionals in that way, so according to them new developments do not solve the social problems of the city at all, but rather reinforce the already strong presence of segregation and contribute to social exclusion.

Table 8: The proportion of graduates in different urban zones, 2014 (%)

| Urban zones | Tatabánya | New towns' average |
|---|---|---|
| City centre | 11.8 | 11.3 |
| Near centre (high) | 12.5 | 10.5 |
| Near centre (low) | 0 | 21.3 |
| Housing estate (high) | 10 | 12 |
| Housing estate (low) | 10.9 | 7.9 |
| Suburban zone (high) | 13.8 | 13.1 |
| Suburban zone (low) | 10.5 | 7.9 |
| Rural type family home (high) | 0 | 6.5 |
| Rural type family home (low) | 18.8 | 17.5 |
| Villa quarter | 0 | 20 |
| Gated community | 15.9 | 29.3 |
| Enclosed garden, recreation area | 4.8 | 11.4 |
| Slum, poor housing | 1.4 | 6 |

*Source: Hungarian Scientific Research Fund survey data, 2014*

### *Environmental conditions, quality of living environment*

Tatabánya, like other heavy industrial towns in the past, had to face the serious environmental problems as the consequences of mining and heavy industrial activities. It should also account for the unfavourable and wrong quality and state of the natural environment and air, the problems and costs of the re-cultivation and re-utilisation of abandoned mines buildings.

After the mine closures, the issue of rehabilitation of abandoned degraded industrial sites and plants has not been resolved up to this day. Since in the early nineties, the vast majority of large companies having freshly moved into the town started their operation as a greenfield investment in the industrial park, the proportion of brownfield investments remained low. It is typically small- and medium-size enterprises that began to operate sporadically in these former factory buildings, offices.

On the site of the cement plant today, especially such kind of small and medium-sized businesses operate. However, there was no comprehensive strategy for the city as to how the brownfield zone in the town's area should be rehabilitated and create new urban function .

Although the local government has modified the urban structural plan in order to integrate these building complexes into the urban fabric better and to attach new functions to them, only partial results have been achieved. Today a number of abandoned former industrial buildings and plots are left in the town in very poor physical condition, the exploitation of which is currently still in question and they are still spoiling the cityscape.

It is not only the perishing reminiscent buildings of heavy industry cause concerns in the town, but also of the historic public buildings of high architectural value such as the former mine, the so-called People's House (now the property of the municipal and county government), the building of the Mine Officers' Club and of the Infirmary. These public buildings built at the turn of the century in the 1910s and 1920s are representing high architectural value. They are currently vacant, though there have been some attempts for their utilisation.

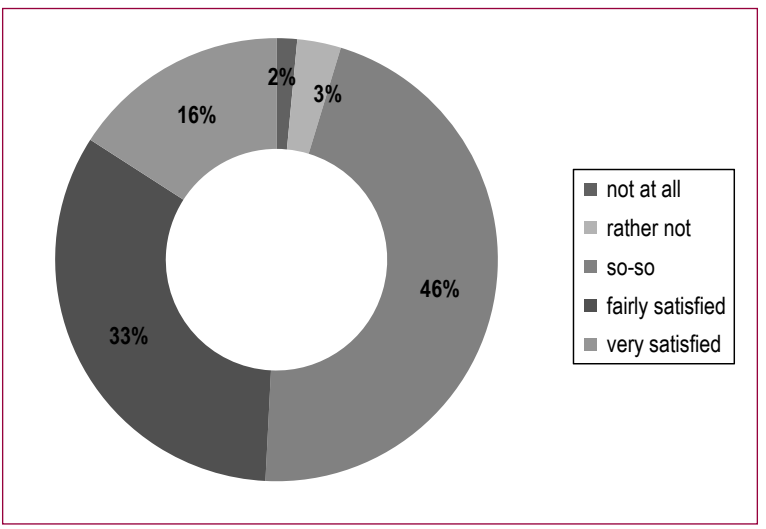
"In the early 2000s, in the period of the major real estate development boom there was plan for creating a mixed-use (residential, recreation, spa tourism) area in the territory of Hospital.

But now that option became unrealisable for several reasons. It is mostly because of the crisis." The utilisation of these buildings and their extension with new functions have yet to be left for the future as a serious contradiction has been generated by the town's declining population and the monumentality of these buildings.

Another serious problem in the city is the absence of high standard and quality commercial and cultural services and the lack of pleasant public spaces. This problem is exactly manifested by the fact that, although the top managers of Tatabánya's multinational companies work in Tatabánya but they chose to live near Tata or Vértesszőlős, the dwelling spaces of much higher prestige, providing high-quality services (elegant hotels, restaurants, cafes), and not to mention Budapest, being at a distance of only 60 kilometres. Tatabánya has only one three-star hotel, which was built in the seventies. It is in a deteriorating state, satisfying neither the local nor the regional demands any more.

The rejection of low quality residential environment is reflected in the results of a residential satisfaction survey as well. Almost half of the surveyed inhabitants of Tatabánya area are moderately satisfied with their residential environment *(see Figure 14)*.

Figure 14: Residential satisfaction with the residential environment, in connection with the renovation of buildings, 2015 (%)




*Source: The author's own edition based on the results of the questionnaire survey of the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund, 2015*

The local experts interviewed believe that in the future improving the town's living environment quality, increasing the quality and supply of local services will inevitably be indispensable, because without this there will be serious impediments to maintain the town's middle and upper middle-class.

### *Intentions to move*

The liberated real estate market after the regime change, the possibility of moving and the start of the new real estate developments strengthened the residential mobility and the demand for it, and had an impact on social polarisation within the urban area as well. The population growth that has already been presented also indicates an increase in residential mobility in peri-urban settlements and even signals the start of residential suburbanisation processes. As a result of strong private construction projects housing stock growth became more dynamic in suburban settlements and their population also increased. Between 2000 and 2013, the population number of Tatabánya dropped by nearly 6,000 people, while the overall population of suburban settlements increased by 2%. The growth dynamics of the housing stock surpassed on the one hand the population growth, on the other hand, in suburban zones showed a much larger increase. In the surveyed period, between 2001 and 2013 the housing stock growth in Tatabánya was 105% and in the town's surrounding settlements it was more than ten percent (112%).

Table 9: Changes in population and housing stock between 2001 and 2013 (%)

| | Changes between 2001 and 2013 | |
|---|---|---|
| | Population number (%) | Housing stock (%) |
| Tatabánya | 91.8 | 105.7 |
| Tatabánya's urban region | 102.8 | 112.2 |
| Total | 93.9 | 106.8 |

*Source: Based on CSO data*

In suburban settlements the growth in housing stock is the consequence of private house building and from the middle of the 2000s of condominium construction as well. That is due to the fact that a part of the citizens of Tatabánya (typically families who could afford it financially) moved out of the city and its surrounding villages and built their homes there, or purchased a family house. Moving out of the town was urged by the changing preferences of residence (such as a desire for a healthier living environment, inner-city problems like homelessness, pollution, avoidance of parking problems, or the desire for family housing lifestyle) as well.

Or the moral and physical obsolescence of some housing estates (e.g. Bánhidai, Gál housing estates), as by the end of the nineties, most of them had been in need of rehabilitation, the real value of these apartments deteriorated rapidly. From the town's housing estates of worse ecological situation the people who could (with higher level of educational attainment and income) had moved out just in time. Typically, the middle and the lower status groups remained in them.

As one expert put it, many people have been "stuck" in panel flats, among them even the middle-classes. One reason for this is that the housing market is quite limited in Tatabánya, the smaller and medium-income groups can only pay the price of a panel flat. Under the panel program[11], which started in the mid-2000s and is still going on, many residential buildings have been renovated, but only the ones where the residents could pay the necessary contribution costs.

On housing estates where residents are not able to contribute (e.g. suburban housing estates), there is an accelerated erosion. This is a serious problem for the town, because more than a quarter of its population lives in housing estates. Apart from one or two housing estates of higher status, the typical inhabitants of middle and lower-status housing estates are pensioners. They are particularly at risk, since they are the social groups who have no savings and cannot take out loans either.

[11] The panel program after the regime change is the most significant cross-government term residential rehabilitation program aimed at improving the energy efficiency and physical condition, the liveability of the houses built by panel factory technology. Its funding is based partly on public financing (30%) and partly on private funding.

It is also not uncommon that those who have not been able to maintain their panel apartments move into the outskirts districts of the town to live in enclosed backyards. According to the empirical findings of the survey conducted in 2015 in the urban area of Tatabánya, more than three-quarters of the local residents, 89.7% did not want to leave their home, a total of 6.1% said they would move, and the remaining 4.1% said they would be willing to go but did not have the possibilities. The highest proportion of citizens wishing to relocate wanted to move abroad (35.4%), they were followed by those aiming to move to Budapest (32.8%) and 15% wished to move to another town within the county.

Comparing intentions to move with the relocation indices of other new towns' urban areas studied it is seen that citizens in Tatabánya intend to move in the same ratio as the average of the other urban areas of the studied new towns. In Tatabánya urban area the proportion of respondents who do not plan to move in the near future (87%) is above the average (and in comparison to the other new towns studied is the highest). The proportion of citizens intending to move in the urban area of Komló, being in a far worse social and economic situation than Tatabánya, is double of the average (12%) *(see Table 10)*.

The results showed that compared to the average of the samples in Tatabánya a higher proportion of respondents answered that they do not want to leave, and it was also in Tatabánya where the lowest proportion of the interviewed inhabitants said they would move, but have no opportunities.

Table 10: Intentions to move in the urban area of Tatabánya and of the other new towns studied (%)

| | Tatabánya | Dunaújváros | Komló | Kazincbarcika | Average of new towns |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Will definitely move | 6.1 | 2.1 | 11.9 | 8.5 | 6.2 |
| Would move but have no opportunities | 4.1 | 21.4 | 17.4 | 16.6 | 13.4 |
| Have no intentions to move within the next few years | 89.7 | 73.7 | 69.8 | 73.4 | 78.8 |

*Source: The author's own edition based on Hungarian Scientific Research Fund survey data 2015*

Among the respondents living in Tatabánya urban area and intending to move, there was an above urban area average ratio (6.1%) of people with very low educational attainment, such as elementary graduates (8%); the ratio of vocational school and GCSE graduates (10%) was also higher of the urban area average. As regards occupational position, manual workers, small business owners and artisans intend to move in above average ratio (14.3%). Finally, what is not too favourable for the town is that the proportion of young people but of working age (18 to 29 year olds) intending to move out of the town is much higher-than-average.

## Conclusions

Tatabánya is known as a successful "artificial town"[12] of the Central Transdanubian Region. The former heavy industrial centre relatively quickly recovered from the economic and social crisis following the 1989 Hungarian regime change in comparison to the North-Eastern Hungarian heavy industrial zones (like Salgótarján and Ózd), thanks to its excellent geographical location, good access opportunities, and to its proximity to Budapest, the capital city and the city of Győr.

Tatabánya and its urban region were able to successfully integrate into the global economy. Over the past two and a half decades, a number of foreign-owned companies settled in the town and its surroundings, these have been operating well since that time. Thirdly, the local government's active development policy had a very important role in the town's and its urban area's successful economic transformation, which has supported (and still supports today) by various means (e.g. tax benefits, quick and efficient administration, business-friendly local policy) multinationals to settle down.

The success of the town's strong economy (especially the multinationals) interest-driven development policy is shown by the fact that employment rates are stable, the unemployment rate was

[12] The term "Artificial town" was first used by Viktória Szirmai for socialist industrial cities in her book published in 1988, see Szirmai, p. 239.

decreasing during the last few years and the town is still popular among foreign companies. The town's economy relying on diverse resources prevented the coming of more severe consequences of the economic crisis. Empirical research shows that Tatabánya's citizens are less afraid of losing their jobs than the residents of the other researched new towns, and they are more satisfied with local job opportunities than the average of new towns.

But the relatively successful economic development policy of Tatabánya could only partially remedy the social problems caused by global economic effects, the growing social and spatial inequalities in the urban area threatening the town's and its urban area's long-term economic and social competitiveness. One obstacle to the development of the town even now is that although there are job opportunities in the city, they absorb mainly the uneducated labour force, appropriate positions are offered only for a small part of the graduates and highly skilled workforce. Tatabánya during the past twenty-five years managed to improve its quality of living environment, the physical condition of residential buildings built mostly by prefabricated technology, the condition of public spaces and public buildings as well as the quality of commercial and recreational services only in very small increments. Without improving the cityscape and the overall living environment the outmigration of skilled and younger generation will be unstoppable in the future.

Finally, the town's future development processes will be influenced by a number of factors, such as the overall socio-economic development of the country, including the global economic processes, the general economic situation of the East-Central European region. Among others whether the attractiveness of Tatabánya can be increased, whether the present business-friendly policies and tax incentives and the town's good transport connections will be sufficient for it.

The position of Tatabánya in the Hungarian regional and urban network is another factor in the town's future development. In this context, the question is whether the area studied is able (and other potential partners agree with this as well) to become a sub-centre of the more and more powerfully shaping field around Budapest, the metropolitan region.

It is not easy to answer these questions: although it is encouraging that the Hungarian prime minister in the spring of 2016

launched the Modern City Programme; under the Economic Recovery Programme the Hungarian government and the town leaders of Tatabánya signed an agreement on town development of about 10 billion HUF. As part of it the town's transport system, educational and cultural institutions will be developed. How this will be achieved and to what extent these improvements will really facilitate the social and economic development of the town, how they will reduce or increase social polarisation, it will become clear in the future as well.

# Social and Economic Transition in Dunaújváros and its Region

Nóra Baranyai

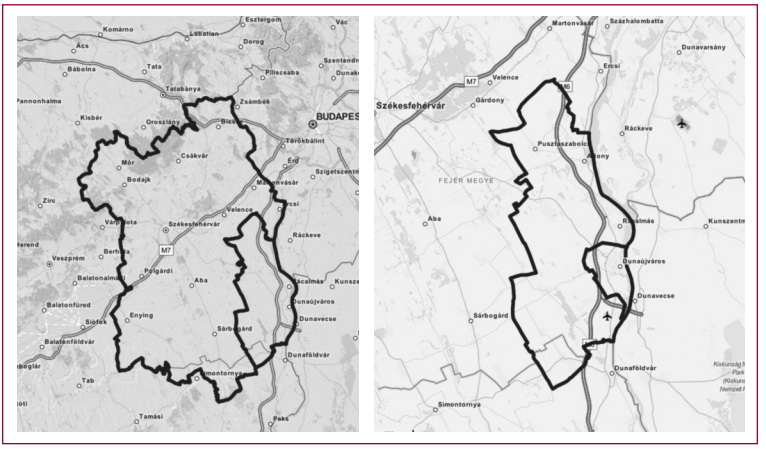
## Introduction

With a population below 50,000, Dunaújváros is a medium-sized town situated 67 kilometres south of Budapest, in the south-east part of Fejér county (NUTS3). It is the centre of the Dunaújváros district (LAU1) *(Map 8)*. One of the town's most important potentials is its favourable transport geography both in the past and the present. Located in the central part of the country, near the Danube, it boasts of excellent transportation facilities (with the close proximity of the M6 motorway, the Pentele Bridge, a river port, railways and highways). The town resides at one of the subsections of the Pan-European Transport Corridor V connecting Kiev with Venice. The planned construction of the M8 motorway would bring the possibility of new economic relationships. Dunaújváros is situated on the Mezőföld plains area, its loess-covered table structured soil has good fertility. The River Danube plays a prominent role in the region's life with its opportunities for recreation and sports *(IVS, 2008);* although the town does not yet fully make use of the opportunities for tourism provided by the natural and built environment *(TK and ITS Foundation Study, 2013)*.

The old town part of Dunaújváros, formerly called Pentele, has existed since the Bronze Age. In the time of the Roman Empire it was called Intercisa and was a part of the eastern fortification sys-

The study has been realised within the confines of the research entitled "Social Polarisation in the Hungarian and Eastern-Central European 'New Town' Regions: Impacts of Transition and Globalisation" (K 106169), funded by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office.

Map 8: Location of Dunaújváros district in Fejér County (left) and the location of Dunaújváros in the district (right)




*Source of maps: OpenStreetMap (2015)*

tem (Limes) protecting Pannonia. Hungarian tribes settled in the region in the tenth century. Pentele (which is named after a Greek saint, St. Pantaleon) was destroyed during the Mongolian invasion, and came under Turkish rule in 1541. After the 1688 liberation it saw an influx of Serbs. After the defeat of the War of Independence led by Rákóczi, Hungarians were settled down again in the deserted settlement. The predominantly agricultural town was raised to the rank of market town in 1833. During the administration reforms in 1870, it was again downgraded to village status. It kept its agricultural character until the middle of the 20th century.

The construction of today's Dunaújváros was approved by the Council of Ministers[1] on 28 December 1949. It was built as the most important project of the first five-year plan (1950-54)[2]. The Metallurgical Plants were to be constructed in the outskirts of the village of Pentele, then having a population of 4,000. This selection was justified by the settlement's good transportation geography and location as the Cabinet wanted to keep this new industrial base well away from both the capital and the Yugoslavian border. Dunapentele was declared town and renamed as Sztálinváros

1 The former name of the Hungarian government between 1949 and 1990.
2 The three and most of the five-year plans were medium-term economic development programmes of the state socialist period.

(Stalin City) in 1951. The town and the industrial complex were originally planned for 25,000 inhabitants (later 40,000) and became one of the symbols of the industrialisation of the 1950s and of the Hungarian socialist realist architecture *(Szirmai, 1988)*. The 'Sztálin Vasmű' (Stalin Iron Works) was renamed 'Dunai Vasmű' (Danube Iron Works, today Dunaferr). Sztálinváros was renamed Dunaújváros in 1961.

In the 1950s and 1960s regional development policy including housing developments, community services and infrastructure development, extreme attention was paid to the town. It maintained its privileged position later as well. Industry, namely metallurgy, was the driving force behind the town's development, although the domination of heavy industry did not lead to an entirely one-sided industrialisation. Many light industrial plants were built in the 1960s and 1970s, mainly to employ the significant amount of women workers. The heavy industrial complex that formed the town's economic base was built over the first five-year plan and became one of the most important hubs of the Hungarian steel industry. Industrial development and new heavy industrial establishments created many new jobs. The increased demand for labour increased the population more than sevenfold from the 1949 number of 3949 people to 30,976 in 1960. Housing development also boomed with the creation of a large number of new jobs: between 1970 and 1990 the housing stock almost doubled, from 11,627 to 21,942 units. The homes were built by the company and had high comfort levels. Institutions such as nurseries, kindergartens, schools and doctor's surgeries were built to provide a high standard of care for workers. The combined effect of job and housing opportunities led to the continued growth of the population, which almost reached 60,000 in 1980. The concentration of industry affected the region's settlements as heavy industry employed more and more workers from neighbouring villages.

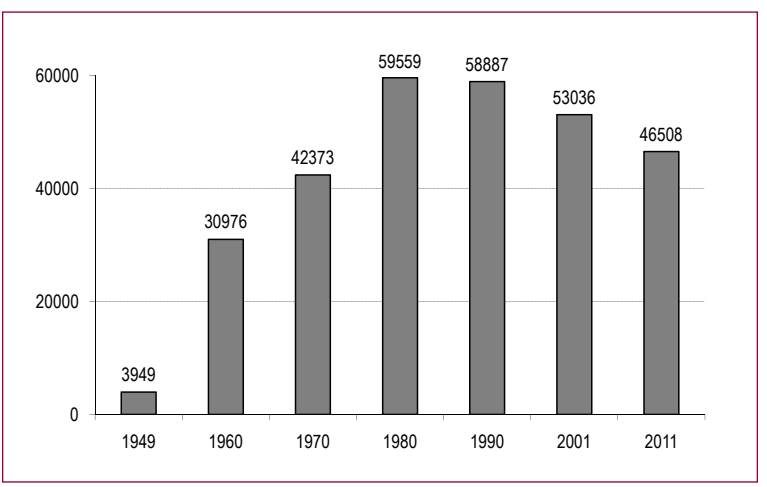
## The social characteristics

Over the last twenty-five years the town's society has undergone significant structural changes. The town's population numbers were primarily affected by economic processes although overall national trends (e.g. natural population decrease) also played a

role. After a dynamic growth during the state socialist period, the heavy industrial centre's population started to dwindle slowly but steadily, starting a few years before the regime change *(see figure 15)*. This was caused by (1) the low number of births which was further decreasing, (2) the several waves of suburbanisation, and (3) migration due to the difficulty of finding new jobs. During the boom period the town saw an excess of males (51.1 percent) which plateaued in 1980 and since then it has been steadily decreasing (to 48.1 percent in 2011).

Dunaújváros has an ageing population, which is congruent with national trends *(Figure 15)*. Due to its "artificial town" nature, its population was young in the beginning, most of them of working age, and the influx of young people also meant a significant amount of children. However, after the 1989 regime change the town's population started to drastically shift towards older people. The 2011 census data show that almost 25 percent of the population is in the oldest age group. The 0.3 ageing index[3] of the 1970s and 1980s has increased eightfold, being 2.1 in 2011, which means a very rapid aging of the population.

Figure 15: Changes in the population of Dunaújváros (1949-2011) (people)




*Source: The author's own edition based on the census figures of the Central Statistical Office*
*Note: The figure uses data for the "present population" for the period between 1949 and 1960, and data for permanent population afterwards*

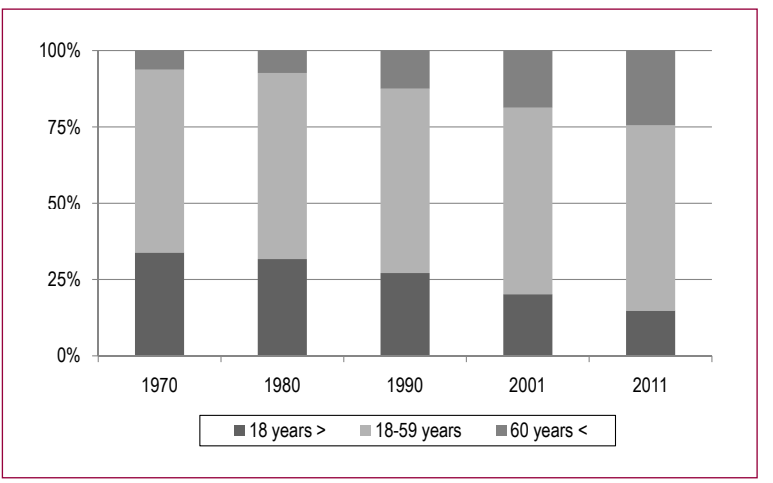
[3] As data for the period prior to the regime change is limited, in this case we calculated the index based on population aged over 60 instead of 65.

In line with demographic trends, the number of families is also decreasing, although the average number of family members has not changed in the past 30 years. The share of single-parent families has increased in recent decades, which is also indicated by the nationally significant divorce rate (16.4% compared to the 11.6% national average). In contrast to previous processes, the number of households continues to grow in Dunaújváros, which essentially implies a reduction in the average number of households. In addition to ageing, social problems are also implied by the high rate of families (26.7%) and households (38.4%) with no employed members, which has increased in the past decade.

The educational attainment of the population has significantly changed compared to the early years. It has significantly increased since 2001: high school graduates went from 27% to 33%, while the share of people with college and university degrees increased from 9% to 14%. However, this positive change did not affect the town's sluggish development much: although the number of high school graduates is significantly higher than the county average, the increase in university graduates has been much slower than elsewhere.

The economy's industrial nature can be felt by looking at the percentage of employees by economic sectors. Although in recent decades the share of service sector workers has increased, the

Figure 16: Changes in the age structure of Dunaújváros (1970-2011) (%)




*Source: CSO Census Data 1970-2011.*

share of industrial employees is still important (47 percent). On the one hand, the dominance of industry is a problem, not only because tertiary industry has more favourable indicators in developed economies from the standpoint of employment and GDP, but also from the point that in the case of Dunaújváros industry means practically a single company, which carries significant risks. On the other hand, it is an advantage, as it shows how this sector managed to survive in the last 25 years, unlike in other new towns.

Unemployment in Dunaújváros and its micro-region (especially in a national context) only became a palpable problem due to the 2008 financial and economic crisis when it reached almost 9%. In 2013 it fell back to almost the previous levels. However, long-term unemployment affects a large number of people, especially women, with 33% of job seekers taking more than a year to find a job. The more severe unemployment affecting women is partly due to lower education as they made up the larger portion of semi-skilled and unskilled workers (which was higher than the national average) *(Szirmai, 1988),* so their job prospects are much worse in the town's male-dominated, qualified workforce. In addition to disability pensions and retirements, the absorption of women workers was mostly possible by services and newly established retail chains, with alternatives including healthcare and education.

Some social features make Dunaújváros stand out from other new towns. With its population boom during the state socialist period, it has become the second most populous new town. After the regime change it also showed the most dynamic rate of population loss (21%). Due to limitations resulting from the size of the town's administrative area, expansion is almost impossible and even with the steadily declining population, its density is particularly high (883 people/km$^2$). This means the majority of the housing stock consists of 50-55 square metre 2-room panel flats, giving Dunaújváros the smallest average apartment size on average (58 m$^2$). However, as a result of planned housing projects the percentage of fully equipped apartments is more favourable than in other new towns (at 95.1%). At the change of regime most (46.7%) of the housing stock consisted of council flats. In the coming years the municipality – by the speed and volume of selling these flats – was among the first ones in getting rid of them, so the amount of council housing dropped from more than 10,000 in 1990 to 635 residential units in 2001 and to 348 in 2011.

In terms of the population's income level, and thus tax paid (2012), Dunaújváros is in a favourable position, ranking 4th among new towns. Statistical data shows that the population is bigger in higher income brackets than in other new towns (except Paks where their numbers are much higher). This is explained by a larger number of managers and especially well-paid skilled workers[5] (based on questionnaire surveys they make up 45.3% of the active population, compared to the 37.8% new town average). This favourable income situation is also shown in subjective evaluations. Out of the 11 Hungarian new towns surveyed, Dunaújváros has the fewest people struggling with financial problems (including utility payments and loan repayments), although the abundance of wealth is also limited to a relatively smaller group. The above is somewhat contradicted by the fact that residents of the Dunaújváros region believe their social situation is worse than the average of new town regions. The residents of Dunaújváros, a town built with the aim of ensuring high quality of life, is on average more dissatisfied with local, regional characteristics (facilities, environment, infrastructure) than other new town residents. The exceptions are education and social services, which are rated better than average. The locals also attach moderate importance to factors that may play a role in urban development. The expectations of the local residents of Dunaújváros regarding the impact of multinational companies are more subdued (maybe due to Dunaferr's problems), while other rural communities have greater hopes for the settlement of these companies. A more detailed exploration of the relationship between multinational companies and urban development shows us that the residents of Dunaújváros region expect miracles from foreign capital to a lesser extent than people do elsewhere. In the interviews one expert also reported on the following phenomenon: "Nowadays the public has negative sentiments towards multinationals but we must not forget that this town would perish without the Iron Works." Despite the relatively unfavourable opinion about the local situation, locals feel social problems and regional conflicts less severe in the Dunaújváros micro-region than in new town regions as a whole. They see the increase of poverty as the biggest problem, and among conflict

[4] Dunaferr employees receive 13th and 14th month salaries as well.

types they list the tensions between employees and managers, probably inseparable from major employers, and tensions between the rich and the poor as the most prominent ones.

Based on objective – i.e. statistical – indices, the subjective opinion of the local residents of Dunaújváros did not match on the favourable position of the town and its micro-region among new towns. We can assume that the atmosphere that sprung up in the last years due to the uncertainty of the issues around Dunaferr has had a significant effect on people's state of mind.

### *The characteristics of the new town region's development*

The ownership structure of corporations changed after the regime change, with privatisation pushing back the amount of state-owned property in new town economies that were often exclusively based on state enterprises, which by now has almost completely disappeared. As a result of globalisation and market economy, foreign capital has become a decisive factor in the lives of new towns, although its influx did not equally affect all cities. With the privatisation of Dunaferr, state capital has completely vanished in Dunaújváros and foreign capital has become dominant (at 57%) since the regime change, and especially since 2003. Major employers completely vanished in some new towns while in others they were replaced by new ones although smaller in numbers. The number of large companies also shrank in Dunaújváros (the town currently has three companies with 500+ employees) although significant ones have remained or been reformed in the past decades. The strength of local economies is illustrated by the specific index of business taxes paid by companies (2011), which ranks Dunaújváros at the 5th place among new towns.

The town's regional organisation functions could only strengthen after the regime change as in the early period its institutions were deficient and lacked traditional relations with surrounding communities. In addition to the gradual, spontaneous expansion of central functions, the creation of the micro-regional system strongly influenced the development of regional relations[5].

[5] Micro-regions became the building blocks of regional development thanks to the 1996/XXI. Act on regional development and physical planning. In multi-purpose micro-regional associations they fulfilled public service tasks as well. The district

Dunaújváros is the centre of employment, services and institutions in the region. The town's attraction is mainly apparent on a regional[6] and county level (in the eastern and southern parts of Fejér County), although some of its functions (education, transportation, employment) have elevated it to a regionally important municipality. The construction of the Pentele Bridge in 2007 brought a significant change by creating an interregional role for Dunaújváros. This can be seen in the intensification of relationships with settlements near the Danube in Bács-Kiskun County (expansion of the catchment area of suburbanisation, employment and education).

As a result of the global steel crisis the town's development significantly slowed down even before the regime changed. The recession continued to deepen in the early 1990s. The large enterprises of Dunaújváros reached a crisis due to huge debts, the loss of eastern markets, unprofitable production and outdated products and prices *(Szirmai, 1997)*. The town's role in Hungary's spatial structure changed after the political transition. Dunaújváros lost its privileged position but retained its original, mono-cultural economic structure that was based on heavy industry. Any form of economic transition (and its associated symptoms and problems) barely appeared in the next decade.

Thanks to the Antall government's privatisation policy[7] the Danube Iron Works stayed among long-term state-owned assets, meaning it was still state property (although it was partly council property as well by then)[8], so changes only affected the company's internal organisational structure. After the crisis prevention stra-

system established in 2013 stripped micro-regions of their functions, leading to their demise in 2014. Excluding Dunaújváros itself, the Dunaújváros micro-region was formed by eight municipalities: Baracs, Daruszentmiklós, Előszállás, Kisapostag, Mezőfalva, Nagykarácsony, Nagyvenyim, and Rácalmás. In addition to these municipalities, the Dunaújváros district also includes Adony, Kulcs, and Perkáta, which had formerly separated from the micro-region.

6 The intensifying relationships with neighbouring municipalities are indicated by the fact that the 2014 demarcation of agglomerations by the CSO included the creation of the Dunaújváros joint settlement (which includes Kisapostag, Kulcs, Nagyvenyim and Rácalmás in addition to the centre). *(Tóth, 2014)*

7 Hungary's first government after the political transition (MDF–KDNP–FKgP coalition) led by Prime Minister József Antall (1990–1993).

8 The Municipality Dunaújváros possessed initially 15%, later on, at the time of privatisation 5.59% of the shares of the Danube Iron Works Corporation Limited.

tegy of the 1980s[9] the foundation of the Dunaferr Iron Works Corporation in 1992 meant the development of a new enterprise resource planning system, and the reorganisation of the various units into one company. Following national trends, the town's other companies and factories were either privatised, significantly downsized or dissolved after the collapse of the Soviet market, giving rise to unemployment, especially among women employed in light industries. The settlement's new town nature left another distinctive mark on the local economy, namely the lack of entrepreneurial spirit. In the full employment (and hidden unemployment) of the socialist period entrepreneurial culture did not develop and there was no need to acquire skills and knowledge needed for enterprise. Although local small businesses did appear after the regime change but they were largely destroyed as they could not compete with newly entering multinational companies. The entrepreneurial sector is still not strong on a regional level *(see Table 11),* and despite a significant restructuring during the last decade the presence of industrial companies is still stronger (especially among business partnerships) than in historic cities.

Although more than a decade did not bring significant changes to the economy of Dunaújváros (especially when compared to other cities), the situation immediately changed in the early 2000s with the privatisation of the Danube Iron Works. The Medgyessy government decided to sell state property in 2002[10] and although it built safeguards[11] into the contract to mitigate the crisis that would have followed privatisation, local society was shocked by the sale of the company in 2003. The company group was bought by the Donbass-Duferco investment consortium[12]. It is currently owned by the ISD Donbass Group[13].

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9 In the 1980s the corporate strategy of the Danube Iron Works included distancing the company from relying on CMEA exports *(Havellant, 2007).*

10 The fifth government of Hungary after the regime change (MSZP–SZDSZ coalition) led by prime minister Péter Medgyessy (2002–2004).

11 see V. Szirmai's chapter for more details.

12 Consortium members include the Donbass Industrial Union (Ukraine), the Alchevsky Steel Combine (Ukraine), Duferco International Trading Holding Ltd. (Switzerland) and Kundax AG (Germany).

13 Founded in Donetsk in 1995, the company is among the world's 40 largest steel producers, with a yearly capacity of 10 million tons of steel. In 2009 the majority of Donbass shares (50% + 2 shares) were acquired by a Russian buyer *(Weiner, 2013).* Presumably the state-owned Vnesheconombank is the entity behind these indirect capital investments *(Kalotay et al, 2014).*

Table 11: Main features of the economic entities in the Central Transdanubian (NUTS 2) towns of county rank (2014)

| settlement | Number of businesses per 1000 inhabitant (No.) | Number of corporate enterprises per 1000 inhabitants (No.) | Proportion of enterprises operating in industry (%) | Proportion of joint enterprises operating in industry (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dunaújváros | 121 | 44 | 12.7 | 23.6 |
| Tatabánya | 131 | 58 | 15.0 | 23.2 |
| Székesfehérvár | 178 | 68 | 10.9 | 19.4 |
| Veszprém | 173 | 62 | 10.7 | 16.2 |
| Country total | 173 | 59 | 10.0 | 17.9 |

*Source: CSO*

Contrary to other cities' efforts, the leaders of Dunaújváros – feeling confident in Dunaferr (formerly the Iron Works) and the financial security it provided – did not seek to encourage the establishment of domestic or multinational companies. The need for foreign direct investments appeared only almost a decade later than in the country as a whole. For such purposes, the town designated two potential industrial parks from its limited territory, one in the north (1997) and one in the south (1999). However, the expected impact was moderate (obviously due to the delay in interest), with the first major foreign investor (Aikawa) only inquiring in 1999. Hankook, the company able to counterweigh Dunaferr and having similar economic importance, settled in 2005 in Rácalmás (a northern neighbour of Dunaújváros) and has been producing since 2007. The South Korean tire-manufacturing company chose this site because of its favourable location, transportation, its distance from the capital, the availability of skilled labour, and significant industrial traditions. With the closure of the plant's third phase of expansion, Hankook's labour demand is more than 3000 people although interviews showed that the company is only interested in hiring male workers who are qualified and younger than 35. ("The company does not really, how should I say, advertise this, but it does not hire women or anyone over 35."). The company therefore absorbed all appropriate available

workforce in the region but it cannot remedy the problems of unskilled groups, and it increasingly satisfies its needs from (in some cases remote) areas outside the region. Disputes are still standing between the two municipalities surrounding Hankook's establishment, especially the division of business tax. Rácalmás managed to implement many improvements thanks to the mostly freely usable local taxes. Meanwhile, Dunaújváros believes that it has lost opportunities due to Hankook's site selection decision: "Hankook did not come here because of Rácalmás but because of Dunaújváros. You do not find Rácalmás on a map of Europe, and yet they are the ones that can reap the rewards". Hankook's significance and economic power is clear when we look at its position among the top 500 list of companies in fiscal year 2014, where it took favourable positions by ranking 8th by profit and 57th by turnover. The company's development and national economic importance is highlighted by the fact that it is ranked the 3rd among companies who have increased their profits most since the economic crisis, and 24th among those yielding the highest added value *(HVG, 2015, 2015b)*.

During the transition of Dunaújváros, 55 foreign-owned enterprises settled in the town (these include production facilities and retail establishments), which is small on a regional scale but in terms of capital strength these are the most significant ones, with equity capital per company at 2.5 billion HUF each *(Megyei jogú városok, 2011)*. The town's former light industrial sector was revived by Hamburger Hungária. The company, which employs about 400 workers and is the industry leader in Hungary[14] *(HVG, 2015a, 2015b),* made Dunaújváros one of Europe's leaders in paper production. Another branch of light industry is the clothing industry, which also returned to the town with the establishment of Body Fashion Magyarország Kft., creating employment opportunities for women and promising qualitative development in the town's urban economy.

Despite the appearance of major employers and multinational companies, the economic engine of Dunaújváros is still Dunaferr, and although its relationship with the town is weakening, the dis-

[14] Based on fiscal year 2014 results, Hamburger Hungária is ranked 80th by profit and 124th by turnover. Among Fejér County companies it is ranked 6th and 10th, respectively.

solution of the company would lead to unprecedented social problems. Layoffs have been continuous since 2012 as the agreement made at the time of privatisation had expired and the employee head count needed to be rationalised, especially among administrative workers. The last such layoff included some 100 people. Department closures affecting more people have not yet been realised due to protests and political negotiations, although owners have refused purchase offers from the Hungarian government. After operating with loss in recent years, the factory has now financially stabilised, with renovations also being followed by other developments and the factory aiming for new directions (namely, to become a supplier for the automotive industry), all indicating positive tendencies. At the same time, surviving and achieving these goals require more developments and (more importantly) capital. To secure these, the company applied to the government for resources such as EU funds for financing strategic investments.

Table 12: The basic data of Dunaújváros micro-region's most important companies

| Company | Founded | Main activity | Number of employees (in year) |
|---|---|---|---|
| ISD Dunaferr Zrt. | 1955 | Manufacturing iron, steel and ferro-alloy base materials | 4526 people (2014) |
| Hankook Tire Hungary Kft. | 2005 | Manufacturing rubber tires and tubes | 3182 people (2016) |
| ISD Kokszoló Kft. | 1992 | Coke manufacturing | 641 people (2014) |
| ISD Power Kft. | 1996 | Steam supply and air conditioning | 434 people (2014) |
| Hamburger Hungária Kft. | 2005 | Paper production | 374 people (2016) |
| Ferrobeton Zrt. | 1991 | Production of concrete products for construction | 370 people (2016) |
| Body Fashion (Hungary) Kft. | 2000 | Production of undergarments | 333 people (2016) |
| Momert Zrt. | 1989 | N.e.c. Production of miscellaneous general-purpose machinery | 255 people (2016) |
| Aikawa Hungary Kft. | 1998 | N.e.c. Production of miscellaneous metal processing products | 199 people (2016) |

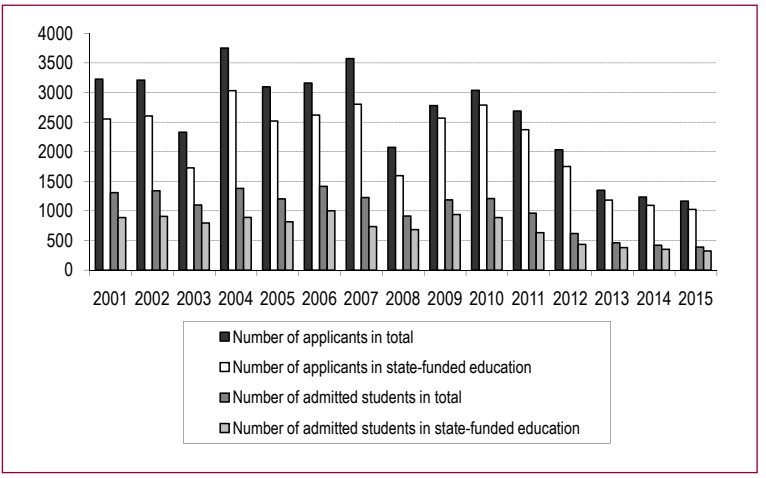
*Source: http://ceginformacio.creditreform.hu*

The College of Dunaújváros satisfies local economic needs for education in metallurgical and mechanical engineering, playing a key role in the town's scientific, professional and intellectual life and the creation of knowledge capital. Its predecessor was the Kerpely Antal Metallurgical Technical Centre established in 1953. The palette of this institute of higher education which separated from the University of Miskolc in 2000[15] later on was expanded with other engineering and business administration programmes and, after 2000, with liberal arts education as well. Development projects implemented in education and infrastructure (a major project of which was the creation of the Campus) have greatly contributed to the growth in the number of students, increasing Dunaújváros College attendees to sixfold between 1990 and 2000. Since 2008, this dynamic growth has turned into a gradual decrease in both the number of students *(see Figure 17)* and professors. The change in numbers is mostly the result of higher education reforms, which brought about the elimination of humanities and social sciences degree programmes and even threatened the college's autonomy. Since 1 January 2016 the institution has been operating independently as a university of applied sciences under the name University of Dunaújváros.

In addition to political and economic actors, civil society organisations and professional organisations have also played a significant role in the region's development. In order to develop the region, the "Összefogás Dunaújváros és Térsége Fejlesztéséért" /Coalition for the Development of Dunaújváros and its Micro-region/ foundation and the „HÍD" Association of Dunaújváros and Its Neighbourhood focused on fostering the cooperation of (regional) political, educational and economic spheres and the creation of common strategies. The main goals of the micro-regional development strategy (which was unique in being created early, in 1999, and by civil initiatives), and the Acél-Híd Employment and Regional Development Programme (2003) founded during Dunaferr's privatisation – such as privatisation, a bridge over the Danube, the M6 motorway, the establishment of new companies,

[15] The institute was called Technicum of Metallurgy and Mechanical Engineering between 1962 and 1969, Dunaújváros College Faculty of Metallurgical Engineering and Metalworking from 1969 to 1990, and University of Miskolc College Faculty of Dunaújváros between 1990 and 2000.

Figure 17: Enrolment figures of the College of Dunaújváros (2001-2015) (people)




*Source: felvi.hu*

and the development of the college – have been realised. However, its intended successor, the strategy of "Regional Programme of National Cooperation – Dunaújváros", did not bring similar successes: "But none of these have been realised, so this was all on a political level now. What we had before, and this is important, is that leaders used to constantly communicate with each other, for example at Board of Trustees meetings. By now this has completely vanished with the new leadership, as new leaders on either the Iron Works' side or the political side simply did not realise that you have to be on good terms with each other. And thus, no major developments have been realised in Dunaújváros ever since."

## *Institutional and environmental specificities*

Even after the regime change, Dunaferr played a significant role in maintaining the local system of institutions developed in the state socialist era. More accurately, through the business taxes paid by the company, the local government could smoothly perform its statutory obligations. The rationalisation of educational and social institutions only took place after 1999 by way of e.g. closing institutions due to the decreasing number of children. This and the concentrated nature of institutions created local and regional conflicts. Later the threat of bankruptcy due to the local

municipality's internal debts was remedied by the national debt consolidation programme, with central budget assuming 11 billion HUF debt from the local government in 2012, and an additional 5.2 billion HUF in 2013. The transfer of educational and healthcare institutions to state funding meant relieving the municipal budget and putting an end to regional conflicts created by deficient funding of the institutions and the lack of cooperation among their maintainers. The town's hardest task was the maintenance of the St. Pantaleon Hospital and Clinic which served the inpatient and outpatient needs of the entire region (about 130 000 people). It was among the first to be privatised on 1 May 2012. Since then many projects have been implemented in the institution from EU funds. Numerous institutions formerly managed by the local government have been taken over by the state. Public educational institutions were handed over by 1 January 2013 with the creation of school districts. At this time most of the country's schools were integrated into the Klebelsberg Institution Maintenance Centre[16]. A change to the social sphere was the reorganisation of the social benefit system effective from 1 March 2015, with the disbursement of certain benefits (income compensation grants) now being handled by district offices instead of local governments.

The special features of Dunaújváros include a cityscape and structure, which in the beginning (prior to the construction of the dull, prefabricated panel flats) undoubtedly made it a liveable town. The design of the town centre reflects a complex town-building approach, so residential buildings were built here alongside supply and service institutions. With the central reduction in infrastructural and housing investment funds and the rapid increase of the population, higher density housing estates were built, mostly consisting of prefabricated panel flats, which had worse ecological conditions than the town centre. The negative effects of "artificial urbanity" can be felt when comparing the town with other traditional cities: Dunaújváros never had a real pedestrian central area, and churches are entirely absent from the

[16] Founded in 2012, the Klebelsberg Institution Maintenance Centre is a budgetary organisation under the control of the Ministry of Human Resources, participating in national public education and the maintenance of educational institutions.

town centre's view. It did have large public spaces and green areas (which are missed in other cities) and residential areas with all necessary facilities provided favourable living conditions and a framework for the development of small communities. However, the neighbourhoods that were classified as residential areas after the regime change are mostly lacking in institutions and facilities, merely providing housing. To mitigate the environmental damage caused by Dunaferr's industrial activity, an environmental rehabilitation programme and significant environmental investments have been actioned, although air pollution is still a problem with a considerably high level of noise pollution.

## Features of the social polarisation

### *In the region*

Within the urban area of Dunaújváros, two groups of suburban municipalities are increasingly visible: the inner[18] and outer[19]rings, which both have completely different socio-economic and developmental characteristics. The suburbanisation that started in the 1980s first focused towards Rácalmás in hope of a better quality of life. The settlement, which has since evolved into a town, could improve the quality of its existing infrastructure and services thanks to Hankook and effective tendering. However, the settlement's increasing property prices due to its popularity did not make Rácalmás an ideal choice for all social groups who wished to leave the town, and so they started to move out to other nearby settlements providing quick commuting opportunities for them.

The unanimous opinion of experts is that these settlements saw mostly the influx of intellectuals and managers who considered maintaining their contact with the town important but now also had the opportunity to create their homes in environments providing a higher quality of life. Settlements more distant from Dunaújváros, belonging to the inner periphery of the southern part of Fejér County are not so popular, in part due to their dis-

[17] Baracs, Kisapostag, Nagyvenyim and Rácalmás
[18] Daruszentmiklós, Előszállás, Mezőfalva and Nagykarácsony

tance and to the quality of transportation. However, they can provide an alternative of city life for less well-off social groups. These people are moving away from Dunaújváros in hopes of lowering their housing costs and they seek "a house worth maybe 2 or 3 million forints that at least won't collapse on them". The services and infrastructure of this underdeveloped region are weak compared to settlements in the inner ring.

Among the groups affected to varying degrees in suburbanisation the migration wave between 1980-2011 brought positive impacts on the society of the settlements of the inner ring, which was suitable for mitigating the natural loss of population; so this is a clear indication that young people (young families and young couples) moved out of the town. The volume of immigration was lower while the volume of outmigration was higher in the settlements of the outer ring so on the national level otherwise typical natural decrease could not be outweighed by the migration process. Dunaújváros, in terms of migration, is an absolute loser; positive natural population trends have resulted from (mainly) the 1980s and the 1990s; during the last decade, however, the difference between births and deaths was -2,145 people. The value of ageing index partly correlates with this process, which in Dunaújváros by far exceeds the national average, while in the suburban zone the situation is more favourable.

The spatial location of the higher education graduates is another indicator of the suburban zone's social polarisation. The smaller than national average ratio of highly qualified strata (16.4%) highlights the new town nature and migration losses of Dunaújváros and at the same time the migratory gains – with a ratio of higher education inhabitants between 10.6 and 21.6% – of the settlements of the inner ring as well. On the less developed parts of the micro-region highly qualified classes rate up to a maximum 7.7%, from which it can be assumed that the majority of those who have completed university or college moved out from those settlements. However, these differences are not only characteristic of higher education, but they also exist among secondary and primary education graduates; this in total view indicates the existence of significant regional inequalities.

The favourable labour market situation of Dunaújváros and its micro-region indicates that the employment rate of the micro-region is above while the unemployment rate is below the nation-

Table 13: The main demographic and labour market indicators of Dunaújváros micro-region (2011) (%)

| Demographic and labour market indicator | Dunaújváros | inner ring | outer ring | micro-region | Hungary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Natural increase or decrease (1980–2011, people) | 707 | -1349 | -904 | -1546 | -902307 |
| Migration difference (1980–2011, people) | -12959 | 6652 | 314 | -5993 | 130472 |
| Total population change (1980–2011, people) | -12252 | 5303 | -590 | -7539 | -771835 |
| Ageing index (2011, people) | 1.53 | 1.05 | 1.12 | 1.36 | 1.16 |
| The proportion of higher education graduates in the population older than 25 years (2011, %) | 16.4 | 15.5 | 5.8 | 15.0 | 19.0 |
| Employment rate within the working age population (2011, %) | 60.1 | 62.4 | 55.3 | 59.9 | 57.9 |
| Unemployment rate within the working age population (2011, %) | 7.3 | 6.2 | 10.0 | 7.4 | 8.3 |

*Source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office*

al average both within the circle of the total and the working age population. The degree of polarisation within the micro-region is spectacularly high. It is better in Dunaújváros and the inner ring than the national average, while it is worse in the outer ring according to these indicators. It is also worth pointing out that the inner ring has more favourable employment and unemployment indices than the town of Dunaújváros. Beside Dunaújváros Rác-almás is another major employment centre; the commuting difference indicator in these two settlements are positive (31.2 and 6.4 %), the proportion of daily commuters is 78.2% in Rácalmás and 36.7% in Dunaújváros. From the above data it can be concluded that while in Dunaújváros the proportion of daily commuters to other towns is relatively small (16.9%), in the neighbouring small town except for a small group virtually the total range of residents is replaced at "working time" (with a commuters' rate of 76.8%).

The social characteristics of commuters can be interpreted in the context of developed-undeveloped categorisation. Among the

daily commuters of Dunaújváros the proportion of young people (max. 29 years), is the highest which partly can be explained by the employment principles of the local branch of Hankook Company, partly by the town's labour market shortcomings. The commuters from the settlements of the inner ring mostly belong to the elderly and middle generation, while the commuters from the villages of the outer ring are mainly members of the young and middle generation. There are pronounced educational differences among the commuters as well; of the commuters from Dunaújváros and the settlements of the inner ring the majority have graduated (at least) from high school, but the employees commuting from the outer ring of settlements are typically less educated, without high school graduation certificate.

Dunaújváros – although with a reduced share of employment in industry – is still a workers' town. With some exceptions it is true to the town's surrounding settlements, i.e. the proportion of industrial workers is high (from 43.8 to 51.7%), but declining. The distribution of population by occupational or positional category also points at the differences between the town and the two settlement groups formulating its urban area. The proportion of managers, intellectuals and other white collar workers in the settlements of the inner ring is near or sometimes even exceeds the values of Dunaújváros, while the dominance of industrial workers – which is therefore characteristic for all the settlements in the micro-region – is greater in the villages of the outer ring.

The ratio of long-term job seekers among jobless people is relatively high in the micro-region; it is between 40-60 percent in case of people with over 180 days of unemployment. The problem is even more important as the proportion of people receiving unemployment benefit in the region is higher than the national and county average; here in the micro-region lives a significant group that cannot participate even in public employment[19] that masses of people are involved in today. The public employment indicator[20] exceeds the national average only in some economically backward settlements hit by serious unemployment (2.59%);

[19] Public employment (a kind of special, temporary employment) is a state program aimed at returning public employees previously long-term unemployed successfully back into the mainstream of labour market.

[20] The public employment indicator is the annual average number of public employees in the population of working age.

Table 14: The major taxation data of Dunaújváros micro-region (2012)

| | proportion of taxpayers (%) | personal income per capita (HUF) | business tax per capita (thousand HUF) (2011) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Dunaújváros** | 49.6 | 326582 | 72 |
| **inner ring** | 50.2 | 356508 | 62 |
| **Baracs** | 48.8 | 313439 | 20 |
| **Kisapostag** | 52.7 | 334653 | 15 |
| **Nagyvenyim** | 51.5 | 350894 | 11 |
| **Rácalmás** | 49.4 | 402984 | 156 |
| **outer ring** | 44.6 | 250481 | 8 |
| **Daruszentmiklós** | 37.7 | 277763 | 15 |
| **Előszállás** | 45.8 | 249401 | 8 |
| **Mezőfalva** | 46.0 | 252187 | 9 |
| **Nagykarácsony** | 44.3 | 225045 | 2 |

*Source: National Tax and Customs Administration, Central Statistical Office*

this form of employment became widespread rather in less developed suburban settlements *(kozfoglalkoztatas.bm.hu)*.

The above described suburbanisation trends, the social composition of the population moving out to the different types of settlements and the development gaps between the micro-region's settlements can be supported by the differing income and tax data as well *(see Table 14)*. The proportion of taxpayers and (partly) resulting from it the personal income per capita is high in the settlements of the inner ring characterised by better employment indicators. In Dunaújváros a smaller amount of taxpayers pay a smaller amount of income tax, which once again confirms the hypothesis that the truly wealthy people live in the settlements of the suburban zone. However, the development of settlements is influenced not only by the structure of the local society but local businesses, settled in enterprises also play a part in it through their business tax payments. Rácalmás, through the presence of Hankook Company by outperforming even Dunaújváros, stands out from the crowd.

## *In the city*

Dunaújváros, as an artificial town, had a local society different from traditional cities. During the state socialist period urban and deployment policy focused mainly on the balanced spatial distribution of population with vocational qualifications. This was manifested in the randomness of housing allowances. Despite deliberate efforts to prevent segregation social homogenization was not successful at this time either. The town's more liveable districts already concentrated the higher, while the less green urban areas with less developed infrastructure accommodated the lower-status population *(Szirmai, 1988)*. After the change of the regime with the privatisation of housing stock, with the development of new residential areas and with the dominance of private house construction instead of central state initiated housebuilding, mobility possibilities within the town had undergone a substantial transformation which opened the door to greater spatial and social segregation. The expansion possibilities of Dunaújváros due to the reasons described above were limited, but in the post-transition period, previously unused areas were reclassified as residential areas, mostly in the north part of the town. On the new functionless residential neighbourhoods private family homes were built but the value of real estate properties built close to the Danube bank (Táborállás) depreciated because of landslides. In the downtown area's green zones also a lot of new family houses and terraced houses have been built. In Újpentele district this makes up for almost the full real estate portfolio, while in Újtelep district new streets lie next to the old streets. In the latter district houses were rented for the South Korean employees of the Hankook but a significant number of them have moved (mainly to Budapest). The town's more traditional or prefabricated building stock image has also undergone significant changes during recent times.

With the implementation of a panel building renovation programme, 80% of the residential blocks have undergone modernisation; in the Római district not only the buildings, but also the social environment has been renewed under the social urban regeneration programme (2013-2015). The downtown's function expanding revitalisation project (2012-2014) has recently been completed. The renovation of brick buildings – because unlike in case of panel buildings no government support is available for the

funding of this programme – depends on the residential community's will and potentials, but in many cases not every household has the necessary resources, so a significant part of the housing stock is deteriorating. Kertváros, the town's slumming quarter, consists of three to four multi-storey residential buildings belonging to the inner part where the majority of municipal social apartments (formerly CS-apartments) are situated.

The not at all insignificant differences in the quality of life provided by the different architectural and residential areas make flats and houses in the town's districts liveable for groups of different social status (with different income, lifestyles and needs). The somewhat simplistic categorisation by local experts pointed out that while the private family house zones are the homes of the elite (senior entrepreneurs) and of the middle-classes, the blocks of flats zones are inhabited by the working class, the traditional residential areas are populated by the elderly town founders, while Kertváros threatened by segregation is the dwelling place of disadvantaged groups. The results of the questionnaire survey also support this; by the respondents' opinion the 'poor' evidently live in Kertváros (47 mentions) in Római district (19 mentions) in the outskirts (18 mentions), while the 'rich' live in Újpentele district (42 mentions) and in Újtelep district (37 mentions).

Although during the interviews, the experts emphasised that the status of residential areas has not changed fundamentally, demographic processes and internal migration undoubtedly have transformed the town's internal structure. The decline in population in some residential areas – particularly in the panel house districts of the town – was significant even in the period between 1990 and 2001 although because of their densely built-up and prefabricated nature they remained the most densely populated parts of the town.

However, as a result of deaths, internal and external migration processes in the last decade the relative depopulation of certain residential areas also became characteristic ("there are blocks, where out of the twenty flats two are inhabited, and the rest are completely empty, in fact, there are parts where we cannot show a family in the whole block, just because only single elderly people live there… there are lots of them like this"), which is confirmed by an increase in the number of unoccupied housing units (in 2001 there were 724 unoccupied flats, and this number in 2011 increased to 1612 properties).

The social processes set back the demand for housing as well, which led to the depreciation of local properties. The characteristics of age structure by districts are basically determined by the residential area's construction date, and the following movements within the town. Beside the oldest parts of the town mainly inhabited by the town's founders (Downtown, Barátság, Technikum) however, now even on the so-called young age structured housing estates – especially in the Római district – and on some suburban areas (Újtelep) the proportion of elderly people is high. However, the younger generation even in districts with widespread old generation groups forms a significant part of the local society; this is indicated by the fact that the proportion of child-aged population on none of the traditional residential areas or housing estates differs significantly from the urban average with the only exception of Barátság district where the ageing process has accelerated. The proportion of child-age population is higher than the average, however, in the unfavourable inner city (Kertváros) and in the favourable suburban zones such as Újpentele and the residential area in the town's northern part stands out with its proportion more than twice of the town average. The ageing index and the dependency ratio give a complex picture of the demographic composition of town districts. The Barátság district has the highest ageing index (3.7), while Újpentele, the Northern Residential Area (0.2) and Béke district (0.6) have favourable values – and the same is true in Kertváros as well, but this may primarily be due to the greater number of children in the socially disadvantaged groups, and to the shorter lifespan of the significant number of Roma population living there. The dependency ratio values for Béke and Napospart districts are the best (25.6 and 28.6%), but while in the first one it may be due to the relatively low percentage of the elderly population, in the second one it may be explained by the relatively low percentage of children.

The proportion of the inactive population is the highest in the downtown area with an outstanding 46% dependency ratio of the elderly people. The level of education and especially the change in the proportion of residents with tertiary education is a major factor in the fundamental transformation of a workers' town. The homogenous distribution seen in 1990 had greatly changed by 2001 and neighbourhoods concentrating highly qualified social strata have emerged (Downtown, Old Town, Újtelep) which still

today are characterised by high values different from the average. The most highly qualified population lives in Napospart with an almost triple percentage than the municipal average (35.6%), but in the suburban areas and in the downtown also higher than the average values are typical. The lowest proportion of tertiary educated people lives in Kertváros, the town's segregation threatened area. The labour market situation is another important indicator in the assessment of the characteristic features of the population of the town districts. The ratio of the employed within the total population and within the population of active employment age is by more than 10% higher than the town's average in Béke housing estate, as well as in some suburban areas as Újpentele, the Northern Residential Area, Napospart and in a part of the Old Town. These neighbourhoods concentrate commuters in the largest proportion as well. The educational attainment and labour market data suggest that commuting in these local societies, on the one hand, is directed towards the Hankook Company (workers or managerial groups), on the other hand to other relatively easily accessible towns. These town districts have relatively

Table 15: The difference between the best and the most disadvantaged urban areas in each socio-economic indicator in Dunaújváros (2011) (%)

| the higher value of the socio-economic indicators of the villa quarter | degree of difference between the two zones (%) | the higher value of the socio-economic indicators of the working class quarter | degree of difference between the two zones (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| the proportion of 0-14 year-olds | 9.5 | the proportion of 65+ year-olds | 8.6 |
| dependency ratio | 1.8 | ageing index | 0.7 |
| the share of higher education graduates | 15.0 | the share of unemployment | 5.1 |
| the share of employment | 12.6 | the share of unemployment (between aged 15-64) | 7.1 |
| the share of employment (between aged 15-64) | 18.7 | the share of Roma population | 7.4 |
| the share of commuters | 5.5 | | |

*Source: research room of Central Statistical Office*

favourable unemployment rate, we have seen an outstanding unemployment figure on local level in Kertváros only, which was higher than 8% of the total population.

Based on the results of statistical data and opinions – which coincide[21] with the typical characteristic features of residential societies described in the Town Development Strategy – it can be demonstrated that social polarisation is present in Dunaújváros, and that spatial and social disparities are not insignificant at all. The urban neighbourhoods dominated by higher status, middle-class and low-status groups are clearly outlined and if we compare the data of the zones located at the two endpoints[22], the degree of social polarisation can clearly be perceived *(Table 15)*.

Despite the internal social differences no segregated areas were formed in the town; based on the segregation index[23] only one segregation threatened area (a part of Kertváros described above) has been identified in the town *(IVS, 2008; ITS, 2014)*. Experts explain this phenomenon by the town's "artificial" character: "The construction of panel housing estates created an urban structure where the apartment stock consists of flats between 50-55 square meters, with mostly two rooms, making up 80% of the total housing stock. This is the reason whyt people living there represent the same stratum. Now, where can segregation start? Only at places with no adequate infrastructure but there are no such places all around the town, because it is an artificial one. Or at places where some ethnic groups have been formed, and the town has no such parts either."

Besides hard indicators it is essential to nuance the picture by the opinion of the locals, since the statistical and the experienced sides of the polarisation do not necessarily match. The town is still basically considered a workers' town by experts. The work culture bound to the working class has played a major role in the town's development and this characteristic feature has also proved deci-

[21] Although these neighbourhoods do not completely agree with the areas we delineated, they are significantly overlapping with them.

[22] It must be added that not in all cases do these two residential zones represent the extreme values of a given indicator.

[23] According to the definitions of IVS – Integrated Town Development Strategy – segregated areas are places where the ratio of people with maximum primary education or with no regular employment income reaches or exceeds 50 per cent of the working-age population in a given area *(IVS, 2008)*.

sive during the site-selection and establishment of firms. The rhythm of the town's life is defined by the working class, at the time of shift changes it livens up but in the evenings, all the streets become deserted. There are no cultural effervescences – this was another characteristic feature of a workers' town mentioned by the experts – and in a broader sense, there is no traditional middle-class, which has not been strengthened during the past decades, "because there was nothing it could have been originated from and taken root."

Of course, this does not mean that the intelligentsia is missing in Dunaújváros, but "they are not as numerous, as say, in cities with a historic past." The experts also emphasised that the town has lost much with suburbanisation, "however, such a middle-class is starting to take shape, so this is why the urban, the so-called elite lives there in Rácalmás."

However, emphasising the workers' town character does not necessarily mean that the local society was regarded as homogeneous by experts, although some of them emphasised that the new towns' formerly typical relative social equality is still palpable. According to that opinion Dunaújváros "was homogenous, and I think it is still very homogeneous, in comparison to say other historic towns" and social differences are also smaller than what is observed on national level.

In another approach, the new town character „cannot be felt any more today; it is felt only minimally that we started out from an industrial town, where almost everyone was equal to start life, everyone got an apartment and a Trabant or Buri, so it's about this is where we started (...) we are the same as say, Győr or Székesfehérvár, although they are historic towns." The truth may be somewhere between the two views, the phenomenon cannot be originated from the ideology and policy of the state socialist period only. The intensifying processes since the regime change (suburbanisation and migration) have transformed the society of Dunaújváros; the town lost a significant portion of its high status inhabitants and the lower social strata have also moved out of the town in significant number (as a result of this, the settlements of the outer ring have depreciated, "they received a lot of social problems but nothing from personal income tax"). Due to these processes, many are on the opinion that only the middle-class remained in Dunaújváros; this cannot be supported by the above

described statistical data, but a more moderate form of spatial polarisation can be verified by the argument that in fact no segregated areas have been formed in the town. Although the low and high status suburban zones are located in the outskirts zone of the town, in the majority of cases they lie next to one another, between the town's so-called elite part (Újtelep-Napospart) and the slumming zone (Kertváros) situated in the central part of the settlement and this makes real isolation between the two urban districts' societies impossible. For example, one expert said about Kertváros, the segregation threatened district: "This problem has not worsened, because it had no space to grow or it could not suck in the surrounding areas (…) it has not reached the critical mass and it has remained so up to this day". However Kertváros, the district facing major social problems and being problematic from public safety aspects as well, is a less noticeable daily phenomenon for the local society and its size and local transport routes make it easy to be circumvented. A local programme led by DHHF – Dunaújvárosi Hátrányos Helyzetűek Foglalkoztatásáért Nonprofit Kft. (Nonprofit Ltd. for the Employment of the Disadvantaged of Dunaújváros) founded and owned by the Local Roma Self-Government is trying to prevent the further expansion and deterioration of the town's disadvantaged social strata. The employment pilot programme provides employment and training opportunities not only for persons belonging to minorities but also tries to help the towns' whole disadvantaged society. Under the programme, the members of the groups involved were given a job in various forms of employment under 2159 contracts between 2012 and 2014.

## The future of the local society

The young generation's large-scale outmigration is the biggest problem of Dunaújváros. The town's population retaining power does not apply in the case of the youngest age group, which can partly be explained by the absence of future perspectives and partly by the lack of parochialism: "there is a very local patriotic old generation who built the town (…), and another generation of the seventies and eighties; they grew up together with the factory, they see how the town has developed, and it is hard for them to change

(...), but those who came afterwards are the generation after the regime change, they are by far less attached to the town." The town's job opportunities offer limited chances for the educated classes, so in the case of a favourable job offered from other cities the mobile young people do not hesitate too much. The same applies to employees coming to Dunaújváros ("a good job may attract professionals, it may attract them but they must be retained here, which is not an easy task") and to the freshly graduated from the College of Dunaújváros of whom there are "very few who settled in here in the town ... they go west. Or go to Budapest." Graduates after finishing their higher education studies do not return to the town, but settle down rather in the seat of their Alma Mater – often in Budapest and Pécs – and start working there. However, recently an increasing proportion of population is working abroad, which is typical among the young adult generation, and its negative impact on the town cannot be estimated yet. However, one interviewee has mentioned the future losses arising from this problem, "especially those in their 30s, I know and hear, 30-40 olds go out to work, and very often with children or just alone, young women, for example, who cannot find a job in Dunaújváros; I could bring many examples for those who have not given birth to a child yet and unfortunately they will not do this here."

The outmigration is expected to lead to a further population decrease and ageing, which already – with the simultaneous ageing of the builders of the town – is a great challenge for the town and its social care service systems. Dunaferr Iron Works still plays a significant role through its organisations in the elderly care system and in the maintaining and improving the quality of life for seniors. Within the older age group the "Iron Works' pensioners" therefore are in privileged situation on the one hand due to the high pensions, on the other hand, as a result of social benefits having provided still today by the manufacturer (e.g. reduced priced meals) and other programmes (e.g. excursions).

Dunaferr Iron Works provides extra services not only for the past but also for the current employees; such an example is the 13th and 14th monthly income having already been terminated in the public sector. Hankook, although in different form, but provides significant fringe benefits (e.g. high-quality food service, work clothes, Christmas presents) for its employees. Because of the additional

benefits and the income gap tensions have also been developed at the company on the one hand between local white-collar groups and white-collar groups coming from other parts of the country and living in the Hankook Apartment House and on the other hand, between Hungarian and South Korean white-collar workers.

The residents of the apartment house receive benefits (free accommodation, a monthly reimbursed return ticket for travelling home) which the local residents do not dispute but they resent for not receiving the same level of refunding (e.g. contribution to the costs of housing, bills). The South Korean company employees receive higher income than the Hungarians – for the same attainment level, position – and receive their salary in euro. The completely different work culture can also raise tensions and despite the fact that the company settled down in the region already a decade ago, there is no convergence in this matter.

However, the company's social responsibility role (reconstruction of institutions, sponsorship, grants, and donations) is indisputable, it can more or less fill in the gap left after Dunaferr Iron Works Corporation.

Local society by itself, from own resources is certainly unable to solve the problem of stopping the decrease of the town's population. Even to maintain the current level would require significant surplus population, which may take place according to two scenarios. One would be the settlement scenario, which is justified by the micro-region's long-term labour market needs. The two largest employers are still struggling with labour shortages; in the case of Hankook this has justified the construction of the apartment house.

Despite the company's strategy which was based primarily on absorbing micro-regional labour, all pre-formulated needs, both in recruitment and geographical scope had to be changed: "First they wanted to employ everyone who had a GCSE, but they could not find too many. Then they opened positions to everyone who has a vocational certificate, but did not find anyone; then they expanded the circle; now it is already enough if someone has some primary education and completes the Hankook's basic course".

In Dunaferr Iron Works the age group of the 40s and mostly the 50s constitutes the majority of employees, so the company may face labour supply problems in the future ("I actually think in the Iron Works even the skilled worker supply is not solved. That is, neither the problems of intellectual nor the skilled worker labour

supply") which will have to be ensured mainly by external labour force. Another possible alternative of increasing or at least maintaining the current level of population is immigration.

Among the news about the refugees reaching the country it was said that the region gives shelter to migrants displaced from their homeland: "people were very scared in this migrant situation. The military barracks in Mezőfalva are completely empty, their suitability for accommodating migrants often came up as an idea together with Dunaújváros. There exist such ghost houses here...". Of course, it is not necessary to set the maintenance of the current level of population as a goal, although the shrinkage of the settlement is noticeably a painful point both for the city administration and for the public – especially the town builders. One expert referring not only to Dunaújváros but with respect to the future of all the medium-sized towns struggling with similar problems underlined the possibility of some positive scenarios resulting from the population decline: "you might have to forget it and have to reckon with the fact that we are among the towns with 60-40 thousand inhabitants, but we will be among those with 25 thousand inhabitants but the town will be viable and appropriate for everyone."

## Conclusions

Dunaújváros by preserving Dunaferr Iron Works, which has been playing a dominant role in the town's life, in state ownership succeeded in preventing the threat of a severe economic and social collapse in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The avoidance of crisis could have been really successful if the town's administration had used the time gained for economic restructuring and for measures aimed at preventing and mitigating the eventually unavoidable social crisis. However, this did not happen and the economic structure based on one large-scale employer, typical for the state-socialist period, survived until 2005, and the change of model took place only after a considerable delay.

The failure of restructuring, leaving the mono-cultural economic structure untouched, the total indifference towards promoting foreign or domestic capital investments delayed transition by a decade in Dunaújváros. Despite the emergence of companies suitable for dissolving mono-functionality, operating prosperously,

and mitigating the problems of employment and of the municipal budget in the region, Dunaferr Iron Works, struggling with difficulties due to the crisis in the European steel industry, is still the town's driving engine, its survival is a matter of key importance not only in economic, labour market, but even in symbolic sense.

The decline and ageing of the town's population is more dynamic than the national trends, which is the consequence of a town essentially created from scratch, once attracting mainly young people to settle in, and now turning into a society of simultaneously ageing people in great numbers. In addition to the natural processes, outmigration including suburbanisation processes also plays an important role in the town's population decline and social restructuring. Regional polarisation is clearly demonstrated by the data in the sub-chapter, which can be interpreted in the following sequence: the inner ring formed by advanced settlements – Dunaújváros – the settlements of the outer ring of the disadvantaged inner periphery. The settlements of the inner ring with the moving out of high status and in a considerable part young people are winners of the suburbanisation process both in demographic-social and economic terms. The villages of the outer ring with the inflow of low status groups are typically forced to face new problems to be solved.

The demographic and social indicators examined by town districts revealed clear internal differences and polarisation. Social segregation, however, is not extreme in the locality, and the will to solve or at least to mitigate the social problems of the problematic areas exists. The high level of young people's outmigration in many cases to foreign countries which may lead to further radical reduction in the population raises rightful concerns about the town's future. The exodus – which mostly affects the educated strata; those who in search of better living conditions leave the town because of a reasonable job offer or hopes for it. However, this decrease foreshadows a more unfavourable demographic and social situation than the current one. At the same time outmigration highlights the main problems of the settlement and of the micro-region in a wider aspect; the structural concerns of the labour market, the poor quality services, all of which can be traced back to the delayed regime change and to the specific model consisting of a mixture of socialist and market development.

# Social and Economic Transformation in Komló and its Region

Levente Halász

## Introduction

Komló is the fifth most populous settlement in Southern Transdanubia NUTS2 region and the second in Baranya County (NUTS3). It is the central town of Komló District (NUTS4), located 20 kilometres to the north-east of Pécs. The town is built on seven hills along a tectonic fault. Its climate and terrain offers few advantages as it lies in a narrow valley along a creek, in a mountainous region that is difficult to access.

It is one of the settlements in Hungary with the highest average above-ground level at 215 metres, which strongly marks both its present and future urban development. In terms of transportation it lies in the shadows, as no nationally significant road or rail touches the town. However, the intraregional Route 66 that runs from north to south across the Mecsek Mountains, does go through the town's administrative area, thereby connecting it to the national transport network. Part of the proposed southern motorway's path (Motorway M9) is planned to go near the town, which would improve its peripheral situation, although the motorway's realisation is unlikely to happen within the next decade.

The study has been realised within the confines of the research entitled "Social Polarisation in the Hungarian and Eastern-Central European 'New Town' Regions: Impacts of Transition and Globalisation" (K 106169), funded by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office.

## The town's historical development

A village called "Villa Comlov" standing at the site of modern-day Komló was first mentioned in a certificate from 1256. In the Middle Ages it was one of the region's major settlements, namely whose development was significantly set back by the Turkish invasion. Its population was slowly but steadily rising over the 17th and 18th centuries thanks to the influx of Hungarians and Germans, and its municipal functions were also multiplying. High-quality black coal, which can only be found here in Hungary, was first discovered in 1812, although industrial mining began only almost a century later. From the beginning to the end of the 20th century the town's profile was coal mining and its ancillary industries. Up to World War II, Komló was characterised by linear development. It became one of the region's richest mining towns, making it an attractive place to live. Medicinal water was discovered near the town, and a spa complex was built upon it, establishing the town as an important centre for health and recreation.

The years after the war brought radical change, as the extraction of the roughly 280 million tons of high-quality coking coal, which was strategically important for the military and heavy industries, was privileged in the national economic policy of the late 1940s. Between 1947 and 1948 the town saw more development than in the previous 20 years. Blast furnace coke was produced since 1948. This was indispensable on a national level, as Komló had to deliver a constant and reliable supply to the Stalin Iron Works in Sztálinváros (today Dunaújváros), which meant that the two cities had to be simultaneously developed in close co-operation. As a new town it was one of the model cities of Hungary's forced socialist industrialisation, whose development already became an important programme in the first three-year plan. In 1947 it was elevated to large village status, and in 1951 it was declared a town.[1]

In the early 1950s Komló was the country's largest investment project *(Moldova, 1971)*. Its population was rapidly growing, and along with this its urban functions were multiplying. Miners

[1] Administrative integration of municipalities, which was typical of the socialist period, managed to increase Komló's territory and population, as the town saw the annexation of the Kisbattyán, Mecsekjánosi, Sikonda and Mánfa municipalities – though the latter seceded in 1992.

arrived to the town primarily from Baranya County, the Hungarian Plains and the Little Hungarian Plain, at first by themselves and later with their families. At the time of its elevation to town status, Komló had the population of a few thousands. This grew to 25,000 until 1959, and in 1980 it was already an influential industrial town of 32,000. The degree of industrialisation is made clearly visible by the fact that in 90% of the working population was employed by the coal industry, while 1969 records show the presence of not a single peasant family. *(Karvalics, 1996)*

The town was built simultaneously with the mine's development, as a pilot project. New districts, housing estates and institutions were haphazardly appended to the crooked old village, causing permanent architectural chaos. When comparing the former townscape to the current one the misguided nature of such planning and implementation is clearly visible. The planners had their hands tied by the location's topographical features and so housing estates had to be built on steep hillsides and hilltops. Several professionals would have found it more appropriate if the mining town had been built in a completely virgin area which would have been less affected by air pollution. However, the trepidation caused by forced heavy industry development and war preparations left this plan unfulfilled.

The town's development continued steadily until the mid-1960s, with infrastructure developing as the population boomed. Railway connections were constructed, educational and cultural institutions were built (such as the famous mining school), and many service and catering units were opened. 60% of the town's active population was working in the mines and their ancillary industrial facilities (timber yards, maintenance plants, machine factories). Their standard of living was higher than the national average, with one miner's wages being sufficient to sustain a family of five.

This steady prosperity was slightly set back by the 1963 merger of the Pécs and Komló mines' management. This created the 28,000 strong Mecseki Szénbányák Vállalat (Mecsek Coal Mines Company), of which 10,000 people were employed in the Komló mines and administrative units. Due to the strong lobbying of Pécs, the company's centre was established in the county seat, which meant that Komló lost the leadership of the town's sole major company. This decision put the town at a disadvantage, since the bulk of Komló departments were afterwards disbanded and the

town's leading position in the state's redistribution also waned. This can be seen in the cancellation of previously planned representative investment projects and the slowing pace of housing construction. Komló became the town of branch offices, and the vision of Greater Komló remained a utopian dream.

Development was also set back by factors of unfavourable transportation geography. The unsustainable nature of a unilateral economy built on the extraction industry was made clear and rumours about the end of the town's heyday became increasingly common. The introduction of light industry companies was seen as an indispensable solution, ensuring locally both the employment of former miners and women. Two light industrial plants, each employing between 3,000 and 4,000 were established in Komló, which produced shoes, garments and furniture products, mainly for the COMECON[2] market.

In the 1970s and 1980 the town's advancement slowed even more visibly. The so-called Liász Programme[3] aimed to remedy this, however, its targeted technical and economic indicators seemed unrealistic even during the planning period. Unfortunately, the "glory" of this unfeasible programme eclipsed any concern for Komló and its residents, should the programme fail to be realised. Some 7 billion forints that had been wasted until the programme was shut down (about 70 billion in current value)[4] would have been better spent on other developments that would have served Komló's future. Fortunately, despite the local economy's downturn the operation of several mines continued undisturbed, including the one at Zobák with 70 million tons of known black coal assets. Komló subsequently saw the development of a sports hall, a theatre, a cultural centre, and a hospital, which made it a clear functional centre of Eastern Mecsek, covering a zone with a radius of roughly 40 to 50 kilometres.

[2] The COMECON (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance) was an organisation for economic cooperation among Central and Eastern European communist countries during the Cold War between 1949 and 1991.

[3] The Liász Programme was a complex development package approved by the State Planning Commission in 1981 to increase the production of coking coal in the Mecsek.

[4] 1 EUR = 312 HUF; 70 billion HUF = € 225 million

## The decline

The transitional years of the first half of the 1990s radically and permanently changed Komló's post-socialist development. Degradation did not occur from one day to the next but gradually, thanks to town leaders' effective lobbying which led to the closure of the Pécs mine in the early 1990s, while the Komló mine's operation was extended for one more decade. Over these 10 years the number of employees was continuously reduced, while once working mines were recultivated, and mining equipment was demolished or privatised. The last cart of extracted black coal surfaced in 2000, putting an end to Komló's coal mining history, which had been a success story for more than a century. This opened the way to an accelerating and protracted structural crisis.

Economic collapse started in the 1990s, although to a less extent than in county centres. The extended, artificially maintained prosperity was visible in the still adequate services, and the appearance of the global economy with supermarkets and hypermarkets quickly establishing themselves in Komló. Local cultural life was vibrant as well. For several years some five cinemas served the town, while the town's theatre (Súgólyuk Színház) is still operating successfully and nationally famous handball and basketball teams train at the prestigious local sports hall. In particular, the town's hospital supplies quality health services not only to the Komló district but also to several municipalities in nearby districts.

Between 1950 and 1990 Komló not only did play a dominant role in the region as an educational, cultural, healthcare and trade centre but also a major employer with its economy built on coal mining. With coal mining dismantled and the collapse of the textile and footwear industry that produced primarily for Eastern European markets this role was greatly diminished. Poor transport access and the homogeneous (or in cases, inadequate) qualification of the town's workforce, Komló and its region fell behind in the competition for foreign investors and job creators, which caused increasing unemployment from the 1990s onwards.

We must mention the role that Pécs played in Komló's case. The relationship between the two urban settlements has changed since their rivalry in the socialist period. Today the development of Baranya county seat and the volume of FDI arriving there also have a strong impact on Komló's development. Workplaces in

Pécs managed to employ Komló residents after they lost their jobs there. Such was the Finnish Elcoteq which grew into Europe's largest electronics manufacturer and service provider, employing 7,000 people (750 of them from Komló) before its operations stopped in 2011. Several small and medium-sized enterprises wishing to establish themselves in the Mecsek region have chosen Komló instead of Pécs as their base due to various business incentives. It can clearly be stated that the development of Pécs has been (and still is) the driving force behind the former industrial town's progress, therefore strengthening the currently very weak cooperation between the two towns would be vital.

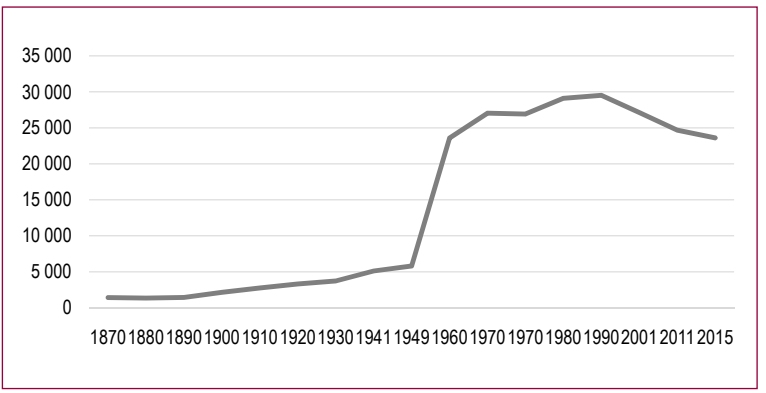
Today Komló is still a regional centre in terms of services (with a district hospital, theatre, community centre, elementary and secondary educational facilities), nevertheless, Pécs exerts a draining effect here as well. The richness and diversity of urban functions remained, however, a drastic reduction in the number of jobs led to the town not providing its own working-age population with adequate employment.

## Social and demographic characteristics

The peculiarities of a new town (such as the population's rapid growth during the state socialist period, an economy whose structure was monolithic, strong dependence on a major company, a predominantly young and male population, and a higher than average standard of living thanks to the high wages paid to miners) fundamentally determined Komló's social, economic and ecological character. Changes after 1989-90 were also characteristic in new towns that were built and developed by force during the socialist period, namely rapid economic decline and population loss which left the town deserted and in a severe recession while it was seeking new ways.

As in other industrial towns, up to World War II Komló's population was slowly but steadily increasing. After the communist takeover, however, it became the flagship of industrial developments during the first 3-year plan. The social implications of this are well illustrated by *Figure 18,* which shows a 20,000 increase in population between 1949 and 1960. This dynamism persisted in the next three decades of the socialist period, although to a lesser

Figure 18: Changes in Komló's population between 1870 and 2015 (people)

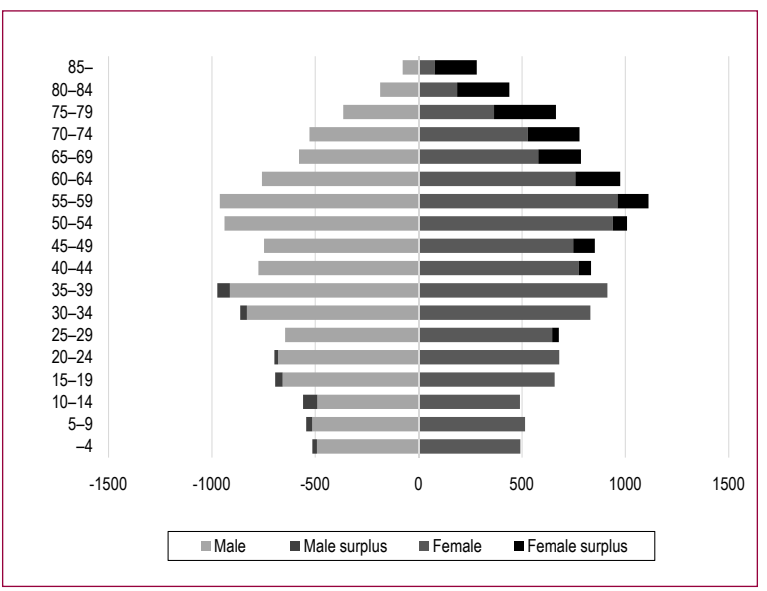



*Source: The author's own edition on the basis of CSO data*

extent. The cause for this subsiding is the gradual depletion of Komló mines and the shift in the spatial balance of national industrial developments towards county centres, rural regional centres in the Great Plains, and new towns based on chemical industry (such as Tiszaújváros and Százhalombatta). After the political transition the rapid drop in population typical of most socialist new towns also occurred here. There were several reasons behind this. It was primarily due to the rapid downsizing and closing of workplaces which led to a radical growth in unemployment. Workers who previously migrated here went back to their home villages or migrated towards regions offering stable employment opportunities. *(Integrated Urban Development Strategy, 2008)* In addition, other factors also played a role, including economic recession and the subsequent social crisis, the natural decline of the population, decreasing fertility, the large number of divorces, the growing number of single people, and a continuously aging population. In the early 2000s the number of live births per 1000 inhabitants was between 9 and 10. Today, this number decreased to between 7 and 8, while mortality is at a high level, stagnating at 14-15 per 1000. The high divorce ratio previously typical of socialist new towns has eased, and in the last 25 years it has been in line with national trends. The nationwide average divorce ratio is 50-55 per 100 marriages, which, aside from smaller anomalies, is also observable in Komló, with 116 weddings and 56 divorces in 2014. The decline of population kept accelerating in the last decade with

forecasts indicating that this will neither slow down nor stagnate in the future[5]. The town's administration currently does not have a realistic strategy that could actually stop people's exodus. Of all 11 new towns, here we can find the most migratory intentions, with more than 10% of survey respondents – who were questioned within the confines of the research project in 2015 giving adequate empirical information in terms of the 11 Hungarian socialist new towns' attitudes, subjective opinions – definitely intending to leave the industrial town. We see an even sadder picture if we compare among new towns the ratio of people who would migrate but are prevented from doing so by financial reasons: Komló is also the "leader" in this area among the 11 studied industrial towns, with 17.9% of the population belonging to this group. The situation is exacerbated by the fact that 10-12% of the town's housing stands unoccupied. Moreover, some 1,000 residents currently work abroad and they tend to take other family members, furthermore,

Figure 19: Komló's population pyramid, 2011 (people)




*Source: The author's own edition on the basis of CSO data*

[5] It is important to note that in addition to migration and mortality, the decline of the population also had administrative causes as the area of Mánfa, annexed to Komló since 1958, became a legally independent self-governing municipality in 1992.

migrant workers who gained financial strength increasingly tend to also take their elderly parents with them.

The town's population pyramid shows the drastic local and regional demographic crisis that occurred over the last 10 years. The figure is similar to the beehive shape typical of East-Central European, and even Western European countries, although Komló's case shows some local peculiarities. Despite the fact that the number of children per 100 families is the lowest here, the number of young people is relatively high. This is due to the higher than average fertility of the town's Roma population (which makes up about 10% of the town's total population), and the fact that these young people do not leave the town. The spectacularly large percentage of women is explained by the lower average age and premature mortality of males who worked in mines for decades, often acquiring chronic illnesses, such as Silicosis. There is a visible dominance of two age groups, people aged 35-40 who were born during the town's economic consolidation and the deployment of complex infrastructural systems, and the 50-60 year old population who were born between 1949 and 1953 when the birth control laws issued by Anna Ratkó[6] were in effect, which coincides with the town's initial, turbulent conjuncture period.

In terms of educational attainment, Komló's situation is special. The relative well-being of the socialist period was also manifested in education, with some of the region's best teachers teaching at Komló's prestigious secondary schools, and large numbers of local students later attending universities in Pécs and Budapest. Additionally, the region's largest mining school was a huge attraction, although it was closed in the early 1990s due to lack of demand. In the 2014/15 academic year the training started again but proved to be ephemeral as the organisers could not recruit enough students one year later thanks to declining interest.

The ratio of people who finished primary school, hold a high school certificate, or have secondary-level qualifications (without a high school certificate) is well above the average compared to

[6] Anna Ratkó was the minister of healthcare in the early 1950s whose name is linked to strict birth control laws. Abortion was forbidden by law, having children (even outside marriage) was encouraged by propaganda, and childless people were taxed.

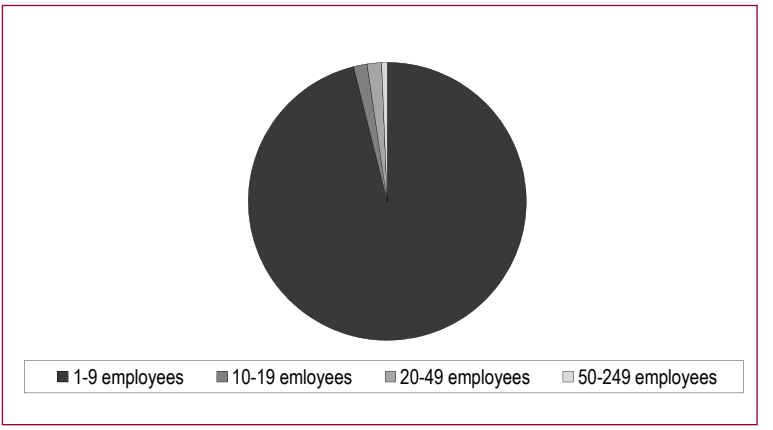
that of the county, and even Pécs. Of all new towns, Komló has the most people with vocational qualifications at 47.5% of its population. In contrast, the proportion of university graduates is low at 5.5%, which is a figure more typical of early 1980s Hungary for people aged 25 and up. This figure is only a quarter of the national average of 19%. In light of data from the CSO's Research Room, there are huge differences among the town's various zones, with 17% of the population in the villa district, high-status housing estates and suburbs having university or college degrees, while their number is practically zero in low-status areas.

## Urban economy

In terms of urban economy Komló is situated in one of the regions of Hungary below the average level of development in Baranya County; its geographical location and economic role is peripheral both on national and regional level as it lies far away from the country's advanced central and north-western regions. The transformation of the local economy in the past quarter century was not favourable for the progress of the coal town, as the mining bound heavy industrial traditions and mono-cultural industrial structure did not facilitate the creation of a diversified, multiple business based local economy. The internal resources which after the change of regime could have contributed to restructuring, to the strengthening of administrative functions and to the establishment of a skilled labour market meeting the demands of technological improvement, were historically absent.

Nevertheless, the city of Komló was able to avoid the economic and social collapse owing to two factors; partly because of the proximity of Pécs, and partly the mines and their ancillary industries nurtured a group of home-town bound entrepreneurs with strong patriotic ties to the town who started their local economic activities here, and they even implement their innovative projects, imagine their future right here and decisively rely on the labour force of Komló. The city's liquidity troubles were greatly relieved by the government's financial debt consolidation programme. From the city's nearly 3.5 billion HUF debt accumulated until 2010, in 2014 Komló had 350 million HUF of long-term loan, but this amount was eliminated by the government's takeover, so this year's

Figure 20: Number of active enterprises (broken down by business demography), 2011 (%)




*Source: The author's own edition on the basis of CSO data*

budget could be planned – for the first time in decades – without calculating with debts *(Municipal Budget, Komló 2010-2014)*.

At present, the economy of Komló is based on locally operating small and medium-sized enterprises. 60% of the operating businesses are engaged in the service sector, 22% in industrial and mining activities, while 8% are in agriculture and forestry. *(Gazdasági Program (Economic Program), 2015)*. The lack of suitable areas for creating expanded built in areas due to the city's topographic conditions was and will never in the future make the settling of large enterprises possible, so the municipality's primary objective in stimulating local economy is to attract small and medium-sized enterprises, because they are able to provide satisfactory business sites only for them.

Currently, the town's largest employers – besides the hospital and the local municipality – are the RÁK Antenna Manufacturing Ltd., producing car radio antennas and employing 130 people, Ratipur Ltd. also specialised in manufacturing car accessories, and KÖKA – Crushed Stone and Gravel Mining Ltd. employing a few dozen people. In 1999, in the town's Kökönyös district an industrial park was established with the majority ownership of the local government, it is currently operating with 18 enterprises mostly in the field of car industry, trade, energy and wood processing.

It is interesting that a growing number of automotive suppliers are settling down in Komló, so that process will establish an auto-

motive cluster; the further strengthening of this economic profile is important for the town's municipality. The rate of local business tax is 2% – the maximum to be tailored in Hungarian settlements; nonetheless this will not be further reduced by the local government, but brownfield industrial business sites are offered either for free or at very affordable prices to future investors. The weakness of local economy is shown by the low level economic activity of the working-age Komló citizens in county and regional comparison. Their employment rate is 35%, which is below the national and the Hungarian urban average (40%). Among them, the proportion of blue-collar workers is outstanding, which out of the 11 new towns in Hungary ranks the second highest position with 74.8%, after Ózd. The 22% dependency ratio and the 35% of inactive earners are a huge burden for the state and municipal social care systems. The unemployment rate is statistically low (8%), which is closer to the national average, but 1,200 people are employed in public works programs – having low work-efficacy, who by statistical data also have been registered as employed.

The mass of disability pensioners is another "improving factor" of the employment data. Under the 1993/21 Government Decree 1,000 coal miners in Komló applied for disability benefits, so statistically they did not become unemployed, but this should be seen as a pseudo-problem solving procedure, which postponed the latent social crisis of the early 1990s. As the above-mentioned facts illustrate and the various urban policymakers' concordant opinion say, real unemployment rate is approaching the extremely high level of 40%. In the Hungarian new towns the proportion of public employees is higher than the average for – especially those working in the disproportionately expanded local government sector – the ratio, however, Komló is standing out of line in this aspect, because the proportion of private sector employees – taking primarily the number of small and medium-sized enterprises into account – is much more spectacular than the average of Hungarian industrial towns.

Out of the total 5403 employed people living in Komló, 2750 are outgoing commuters, their majority works in Pécs, while 1219 are incoming commuters especially from the surrounding small villages. These figures also show that the former mining town's labour catchment area shrank and it is an important labour issuer in the catchment area of Pécs. Out of the towns in Baranya

County – in addition to Komló – only Sásd, with low population, Szentlőrinc, a satellite town in the agglomeration zone of Pécs and Szigetvár, and Siklós, competing with Harkány, the prestigious spa town have urban functional deficits with more people going to work out than the number of incoming commuters these towns are capable to employ.

Retired miners[7], living in large amount in the city, are a special group of the local urban society. The miners' allowances are several times higher than the average Hungarian pensions, so often a retired (can) support four to five family members. Notwithstanding, the aging of local society, the premature deaths occurring in the great majority of cases because of the poor health condition of former miners narrow this affluent urban social group, which in some years or within a couple of decades may bring up a serious social problem to the surface, as many working-age people thanks to insufficient local job opportunities, or to their lack of motivation do not take a job because they choose to live on the miners' pension of their grandparents.

## Social polarisation

In Komló, after World War II, similarly to the other socialist Hungarian industrial towns, an extraordinary level of industrial development, and settling of new inhabitants from the country's most diverse settlements took place. During the housing boom, social homogenisation constantly enjoyed privilege, so there was a general aim to resettle newly arriving miners and their families – while taking their social position into account – as mixed as possible, in accordance with the pursuit of egalitarian socialism.

Naturally, a slight polarisation could be observed, because the settlement's residential districts with favourable location, placed away from the mines, the town centre's power plant (e.g. Dávidföld, Kökönyös) were inhabited by higher income status groups, mostly middle and upper managers, living in mainly brick walled apartments, while in the apartment buildings of the neighbourhoods built close to the industrial area along the railway line with

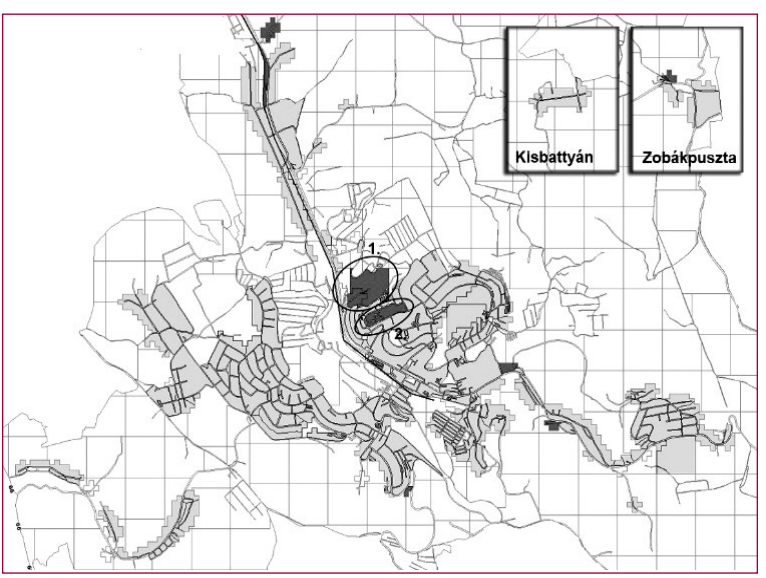
[7] There are some 20,000 retired miners currently living in the country.

unfavourable ecological conditions (downtown, Kenderföld) middle- and low-status classes lived in majority.

The grassroots regional and urban Roma population until the 1980s were living in small communities around Komló, and the town's outskirts – in mostly poor hygienic conditions, in dilapidated properties with low level of amenities or without comfort, while a smaller number of Roma groups with fixed-income working in the mines lived in the town's housing estates. The years around the change of regime brought great changes especially for the Roma colonies pushed into the peripherals, as they were frequently relocated into the downtown areas.

After the change of political system, especially after the permanent cessation of mining in 2000, fundamental social changes have happened. Unemployment jumped into unprecedented heights, urban economy collapsed, employment opportunities lessened resulting in fast population decrease and deepening segregation. The increasing number and concentration of low-income status, usually under-qualified residents living in inadequate sanitary conditions, has become the most serious complex conflict of the city of Komló in the 21st century, crying for effective and urgent solutions.

Map 9: The segregated zones of the city of Komló




*Source: Integrated Urban Development Strategy volume III, Anti-segregation Plan (2015)*

The part of town that is clearly hit the hardest by slumming is located next to the city centre called Kenderföld district, the streets of Vörösmarty, Kazinczy, and Zrínyi and their surroundings. In the ghettoing segregated zones with predominantly Roma inhabitants, more than six hundred people live. 342 apartments are located in the zone of which (of the inhabited ones) the ratio of houses without amenities, semi-comfort and temporary homes is 42.5% – this is ten times higher than the average urban rate, while the share of one-bedroom apartments is 69%. *(ITS, 2015)* One-third of the town's 600-unit municipal housing stock is located here. Some of them are extremely rundown, with windowless, half-burned vacant homes, in some cases, which are used as waste-deposits by the district's local residents.

The educational attainment of people living here is very low (2% have tertiary qualifications); the ratio of long-term unemployed and dependants is extremely high. An effective solution to the city's main source of conflict is still awaited, but the main development priorities for the upcoming years are making order in the area, the demolition and renovation of the strongly depreciating housing stock, and the reversal of the increasing ghettoing process.

Sport Valley, lying on the town's northwest part, in a borough called Szállásfalu, was the most problematic district from the point of segregation; social situation was so unfavourable that the segregation index (the proportion of citizens with maximum primary school attainment and with no regular employment income among working-age population) value reached 56%. The city administration under a desegregation project, implemented in 2015, has recently managed to demolish or renovate unsuitable housing structures in the area, establish a community room in the spirit of humanisation and relocate a large part of Roma families, formerly living in Szállásfalu, into an integrated environment.

For this purpose, the local government bought 17 apartments mainly in various parts of the town in order to curb the further concentration of low-status groups. The renovated buildings of Szállásfalu accommodated families from Sport Valley that could only intermittently be integrated. The desegregation program has proved to be successful, living conditions improved in Sport Valley, however, the relocation of families, once living there, to the inner-city homes was strongly criticised by the indigenous local residents; therefore, the problem has not been resolved, just restructured.

Komló's urban peripheral areas, namely Cseresznyák district and Dávidföld gardens are also characterised by strong segregation. Both areas are classified as enclosed garden zones, where spontaneous segregation seems to emerge. The local plots were divided into lots even in the socialist era and were purchased by Komló's workers living in apartments where they could continue pursuing rural life (grape cultivation, animal husbandry, horticulture). The buildings of the enclosed gardens were never used for accommodation purposes before; they just during the past decade have turned into at first temporary and then into permanent homes for those citizens who have become impoverished – e.g. who were unable to pay the high overhead costs of housing estates – due to their permanent impoverishment. Another problem here is the closed gardens' poor infrastructure (no paved roads, the lack of sanitation) and the extremely poor living conditions. It is important to note here that similar spontaneous (involuntary) internal migrations started in several new towns; for example in Kazincbarcika, mainly due to the economic and financial crisis.

The segregation process of Komló's Kökönyös housing estate compared to the previous case shows a less serious social situation, nevertheless, it is progressing at a remarkable speed. The area's special characteristics originates from the fact that the former city administration at the end of the 1970s and in the early 1980s, planned to build a Soviet panel technology based housing estate for several thousand people because the demographic and migration trends of the period forecasted a more intensive population increase. The first phase of the housing project had been completed, however, the predictions seemed to be false, and the number of incoming settlers drastically reduced, the expansion of housing estates was suspended, thereby an architectural torso, a semi-finished, dull panel town district was established in the outskirts of Komló. Mostly low- and middle-status population lives in these buildings, but in recent years an increasing concentration of impoverished, low educated population with insufficient income has become noticeable, consequently at the same higher status residents are leaving the district. This neighbourhood is far from the town centre and from the power plant, so the public service fees (due to the relatively long access time) are the highest here, imposing severe burdens on the residents living here day-to-day. The conflict of the area is duplicated by a project of building a new prison

here for Komló. Pursuant to the Government's decision in autumn 2015, a prison will be built for 500 people right next to the housing estate's kindergarten. Locals fearing from crime, the increased appearance of socially deviant people held violent demonstrations and tried to stop the project. Despite the protests the prison will be built and the resulting hundreds of new jobs will to a great extent be able to recover the balance of the urban labour market.

Otherwise, crime is not blatant in Komló and its urban area; recent decades have seen a clear decrease in the number of crimes. In terms of violent and truculent crimes, however, it stands out of the urban area's and the region's other districts; among the known crimes committed, 14% fall into this category. *(Horváthné Takács, 2007)*

The two main areas concentrating high-status social groups are Dávidföld, Sikonda and the northwest hills of Szállásfalu. Dávidföld was Komló's elite neighbourhood in historical perspective; this area is located the farthest from the mines, from the power plant and from the crowded town centre, so noise and air pollution are the lowest here and natural conditions are also outstandingly favourable. Today, it is the residential area of the local middle and high status citizens; one can find not only four-storey brick houses built in the heroic age, ten storey panel house monsters, but cottages with small gardens too.

The villa quarter located in the north-western part of Szállásfalu is another important place concentrating Komló's more affluent social strata; its building started with the beginning of the new millennium and the local leading elite still likes to build their houses here. Sikonda, famous for its medicinal spa and sanatorium also stands out with its high status, highly qualified population. The spa quarter is increasingly becoming the target place for pensioners abandoning the town and for the elite, though all this can be regarded as a kind of suburbanisation phenomenon as well.

## Spatial polarisation

Komló district of 36-thousand people is made up of 20 municipalities, of them only Komló, the district seat, has town status. Especially the eastern part of the depressed area, hit by high unemployment as a result of industrial restructuring and mine

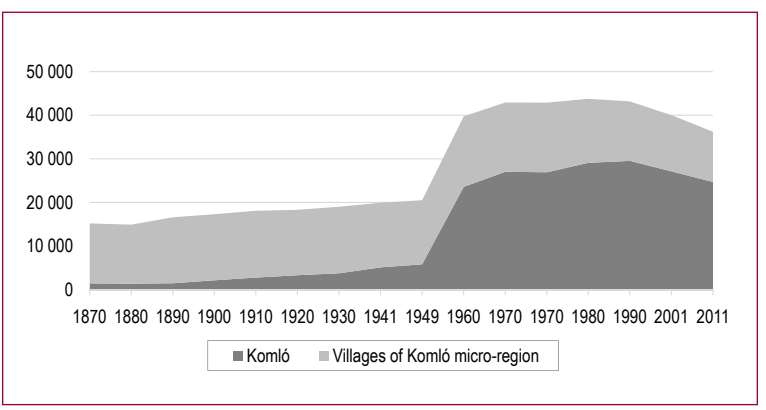
closures, has inner peripheral characteristics, where the employment situation is very critical.

Two thirds of the population are residents of the industrial town of the Mecsek Mountains, while other settlements are mostly small villages, stretching in a long valley with a few tens, hundreds of people. The villages around Komló, apart from a few positive exceptions, are increasing the group of the country's less developed municipalities.

The district townships, villages, without exception, are in a state of demographic decline, the average population of the settlements have decreased 75-60% of their 1990 value. Unfortunately, primarily trained young residents leave the rural area permanently, thus the tendencies of aging, isolation, economic and social "exclusion" are getting worse. Ethnically Komló district is famous for the large number of ethnic German population. In the decades of socialism their number drastically reduced, but since 1990, in some settlements minority self-governments have been created, thus they keep their traditions more efficiently and defend their minority interests more effectively.

Roma people are also present in large numbers around Komló. In some villages of small population their share is well over 50% and there is a risk of formulating ethnic ghettos, because of the accelerated aging of indigenous locals, of the outmigration of young people, which is often a consequence of the Roma population moving in from other settlements where they used to live.

Figure 21: Changes in the number of population in Komló district (1870-2011) (people)




*Source: The author's own edition on the basis of CSO data*

Strong spatial and social polarisation is noticeably present in the Komló district. The villages in the forefront of transport connections with significant German minority population are characterised by more balanced social circumstances and by the absence of deepening segregation, while villages with aging population are rapidly getting deserted, villages with a high proportion of Roma population are dynamically turning into ghettos and getting into backward position.

## Conclusions

The Southern Hungarian mining town for decades was considered one of the greatest successes of socialist industrialisation and was characterised by dynamic development, spectacular urbanisation, tremendous population growth and diversity of urban functions. The collapse of the local industry due to the change of regime and the gradually increasing backlog of regional economic competitiveness during the transition to a market economy have led to serious employment and social crises.

Then the 2000s were characterised as the years of "fight", seeking for perspectives and finally survival came thanks to the creation of jobs, to the development of local small and medium-sized enterprises, to subsidies from various sources (e.g. EU, government), to capital injections, to the proximity of Pécs and to the wide range of job offerings in the seat of Baranya County.

The rapid emptying of the city, the definitive outmigration of its inhabitants, the slow disappearance of generations with former miners' experiences and serious segregation in the strongly ghettoing residential districts in both the city centre and the outskirts are definitely the most imperious problems of today's Komló.

Nonetheless, the city is seeking for its own profile and tries to get rid of the image of a smoky mining town by active city marketing and providing sustainable high-level public services for local and regional residents. This way it will be capable to live on as a medium-sized town.

# Economic Restructuring and Social Polarisation in Kazincbarcika and its Region

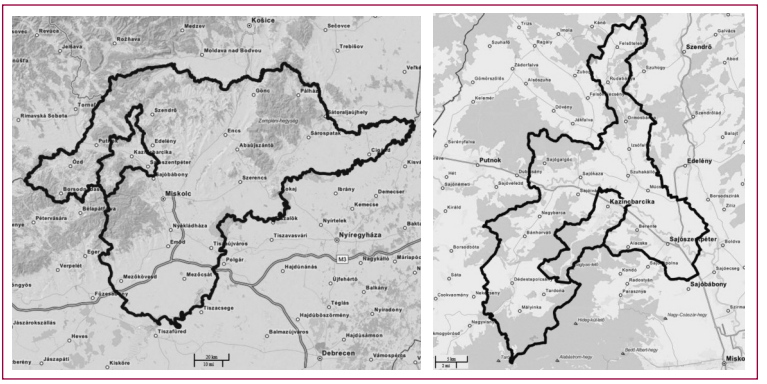
Márton Berki

## Introduction

Kazincbarcika is a town in Northern Hungary (NUTS 2) in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County (NUTS 3), in the Kazincbarcika district (LAU 1) *(see Map 10)*. The new town is situated along the so-called 'energy axis' *(Krajkó, 1982)*, an area strongly industrialised in the socialist era, while also being located on the country's 'urbanisation axis'. Via roads it is 205 kilometres from Budapest, 20 kilometres from the county seat Miskolc, and 23 kilometres from the Bánréve border crossing on the Hungarian–Slovakian border. Via railway it can be reached by the Miskolc–Bánréve line. Concerning the town's post-1990 economic processes, its limited accessibility has definitely been a key factor, since it is far less favourable than that of Tatabánya and Dunaújváros. (In this regard, it is similar to the equally marginalised Ózd in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County, or Komló, also discussed in this book.) With its population of 27.487, it is the third most populous town in the county after Miskolc (159.554) and Ózd (33.493) *(CSO Gazetteer of Hungary, 2015)*. Its population density of 798 people/km$^2$ for its area of 36.67 km$^2$ puts it as one of the most densely populated settlements in Hungary.

The study has been realised within the confines of the research entitled "Social Polarisation in the Hungarian and Eastern-Central European 'New Town' Regions: Impacts of Transition and Globalisation" (K 106169), funded by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office.

Map 10: The location of Kazincbarcika district in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County (left) and Kazincbarcika's location within the district (right)


Košice
Miskolc
Nyíregyháza
Debrecen
Szendrő
Putnok
Edelény
Kazincbarcika
Sajószentpéter
Sajóbábony
Mezőkövesd
Tiszaújváros
Tiszaluc
Tiszaszentimre
Hejőkeresztúr
Hejőbábonymonostor
Hejőpapi
Hejőszalonta
Hejőkürt
Hejőszentmárton
Hejőkeresztúr
Hejőbábony
Hejőszentmárton

was quickly growing. Local mining achieved particular importance in the 1940s owing to the Barcika Coal Mine Company, and a chemical plant was also established to supply agriculture with nitrogen-based fertilisers, based on coked coal from the mines and water from River Sajó. However, the new-town-to-be Kazincbarcika still mostly owes its importance to the massive wave of industrialisation that began after World War II. In 1947, Sajókazinc and Barcika were merged under the name of Kazincbarcika, which was granted the town status in 1954, when it also annexed the adjacent village of Berente. The development of the new town began with the first five-year plan (1950–1954) in the previously mostly uninhabited valley of the Tardona Creek. As such, the new town was built along a northeast-southwest axis, which is perpendicular to the northwest-southeast axis of former villages lying in the valley of River Sajó *(Map 11)*.

Designed by the Town Building and Planning Company, the construction of the new town began on 1 September 1951. The masterplan of Kazincbarcika was primarily based on that of Tatabánya, with some inspiration from Sztálinváros (Dunaújváros) as well, which was built not much earlier *(see Szirmai, 1988, pp. 108–109.)*. The ambitious plan covered all details of the construction of the new town and its industry, including the site allocation for the industrial facilities and the schedule for their construction, the number of housing units, the capacity of the town's institutions and, taking into account the town's expected future growth, vari-

Map 11: The villages of Alsóbarcika, Felsőbarcika and Sajókazinc on the map of the Third Military Survey (1869–1887) (left), and the new town of Kazincbarcika in 2015 (right)


*Source of maps: http://mapire.eu/en/, OpenStreetMap (2015)*

ous parameters of public buildings and service facilities. According to contemporary sources, *'locals did not really know what was to be built, and when word got around that the goal was to create a large city and a centre for heavy industry, they did not believe it would succeed' (Géczi–Nagy, 1956, p. 22.)*. The first phase of the construction was heavy on manual labour, attracting workers (and future inhabitants) from all over the country; mostly from Eastern Hungary and the poorest areas of the northern parts of the Great Hungarian Plains, among them a great number of Roma families. The best-educated masons and skilled workers came from Szeged and Győr, moreover, some workers also came from the GDR who later settled down in Kazincbarcika *(Csurák, 2004)*. Contemporary sources also point out that many of these workers previously took part in the construction of other industrial and new towns such as Sztálinváros, Tatabánya or Inota *(Géczi–Nagy, 1956)*. Meanwhile, as a less-known (and less-propagated) episode of the town's construction, besides the volunteers who came here for a job and a livelihood, around 1.000 of the workers were prisoners of war and political prisoners interned at the local forced labour camp operating here between 1950 and 1953. As a result, constructions claimed several fatalities *(Csurák, 2004)*.

In the latter half of the 1950s, a power plant and a chemical plant (producing nitrogen) were built near the town, based on the locally mined coal. It was followed by the construction of several related facilities (e.g. a coal grading plant, a coking plant, a mining machinery repair plant). The Borsod Chemical Plant (BVK), which is practically as old as Kazincbarcika itself and was created by the merger of three previous companies, played a key role in the new town's life, as in addition to the jobs it created, the plant also supported several local institutions and took a major part in the town's construction. Development greatly sped up by the 1960s, making the town a real success story just over 10 years; plenty of buildings, roads and public institutions were ready by then, and industrial plants were already in operation. (The town's strategic importance is also reflected by the fact that even Nikita Khrushchev visited Kazincbarcika in 1964, on the 10th anniversary of its official foundation *[Csurák, 2004, p. 93.]*.)

Development continued in the 1970s, with the new town's population still rapidly growing. Along with large residential areas, a new town centre was built, many previously missing public build-

ings were finally completed, and the town's institutions also extended their catchment areas. As a result of this extensive development policy, by the end of the 1970s Kazincbarcika undoubtedly became a town in a functional sense as well *(Sikos T. Ed., 1995)*. In order to honour these spectacular successes, the Hungarian Society for Urban Planning awarded the János Hild Prize to Kazincbarcika in 1982, for the planners' outstanding achievements in the field of urban development and planning. (Importantly, of all socialist new towns discussed in this book, the only other recipient was Ajka in 1987.)

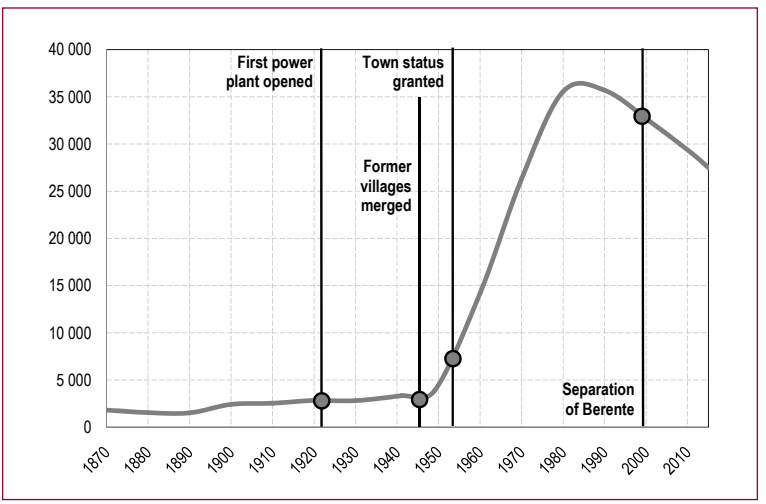
The decade of the 1980s, however, brought several (mainly economic) problems to the surface. The recession primarily started due to the decreasing demand for raw materials and the depletion of the resources of forced industrialisation. In Kazincbarcika and its region, many mines were closed as they became economically unviable, leaving some 2.500 miners unemployed or dependent on commuting *(Csurák, 2004)*. At the end of the decade, coal extraction completely stopped, leading to the closure of the coal grading and mining machinery repair plants as well. The importance of the local construction industry decreased, and the chemical industry was also hit hard by the recession. BVK could remain on its feet through modernising their production process and introducing new products and services. However, the number of its employees was steadily decreasing. The shrinking local labour market led to an increasing exodus of the population, with the town gradually becoming an 'exporter' rather than an 'importer' of labour force. Originally planned for a population of 40.000 and receiving extraordinary state support as a model socialist new town, Kazincbarcika faced enormous difficulties during the politico-economic transition, with the unfolding free market competition significantly changing the town's society and economy.

## Demographic, educational and housing characteristics

The town's 'artificial' nature is best illustrated by its population dynamics *(Figure 22)*. As a result of forced industrialisation after World War II, its population saw a large boom during the 1950s and especially in the 1960s. Owing to its exceptionally young

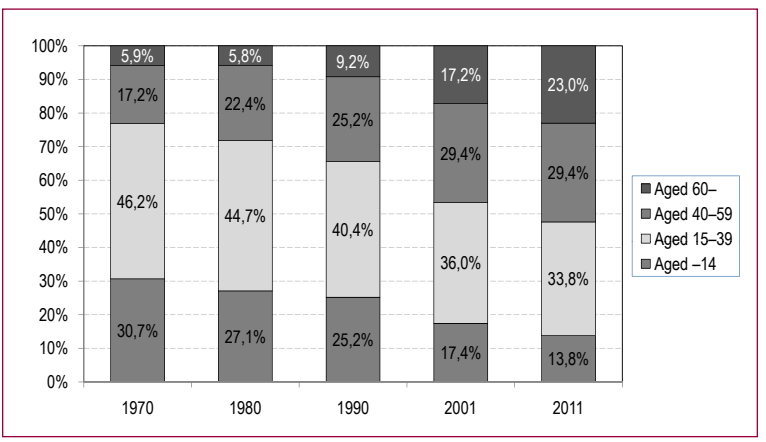
demographics, at this time it was considered as the 'city of youth' *(Szilágyi–Ják Ed., 1963)*, as were many other socialist new towns, such as Nowa Huta *(Lebow, 2001)* and Dunaújváros *(Havellant, 2006)*. In 1970, children under the age of 14 made up 30% of the total population, while people over 60 made up less than 6% *(see Figure 23)*. Even in the 1980s age groups showed a similar distri-

Figure 22: Changes in Kazinbarcika's population between 1870 and 2015 (capita)




*Data source: CSO censuses, CSO Gazetteer of Hungary (2015)*

Figure 23: Changes in the age structure of Kazincbarcika between 1970 and 2011 (%)



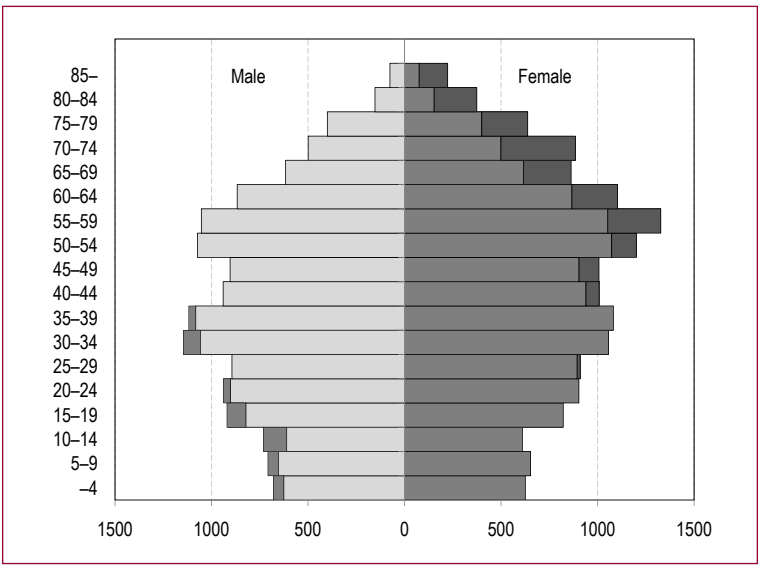

*Data source: CSO censuses (1970; 1980; 1990; 2001; 2011)*

bution in the town. Population growth, however, started to slow down after the 1970s, and in line with the majority of Hungarian towns, it peaked in the 1980s and has been steadily shrinking ever since in the last three decades.

Kazincbarcika's current age structure shows a clear picture of an ageing local society with a strong majority of women in older age groups. (This gender imbalance is likely a consequence of the town's male population mostly having been employed in the industrial sector and the subsequent damage to their health.) The town's 2011 population pyramid *(Figure 24)* still shows a relative majority of the 50–65 year age groups, which is the 'founding' generation of the town and their children. However, groups under 30 are constantly shrinking. It is therefore doubtless that in addition to its obvious political and economic impacts, the post-socialist transition had far-reaching demographic consequences as well. The main political aim of the socialist leadership, at least at the level of official propaganda, was the creation of a (more) just society, which was to be achieved – besides collectivisation – by the state-controlled allocation of housing *(Sýkora, 2009)*. As a result, the official marriages and the compulsory childbearing required for these subsidies both contributed to the survival of the traditional family model, and also 'protected' socialist countries against the alarming demographic trends of Western (capitalist) societies. This situation greatly changed from the 1990s when former socialist states started to experience declining birth rates and rapid ageing processes. Concerning the intra-urban spatial distribution of the elderly (over-65) population in Kazincbarcika, they mostly live in slums, emergency housing, low-status suburban areas and the town centre, whereas young people (under 14) are concentrated in two main kinds of areas, with radically different social status: in the town's high-prestige villa district (emerged in the 1990s) on the one hand, and in the enclosed garden areas on the other hand *(CSO Research Room, 2014)*.

As another aspect of the 'artificial' (industrial) nature of the new town of Kazincbarcika, its local economy was predominantly based on an unqualified (manual) labour force in the socialist period, however, even after the massive wave of deindustrialisation of the 1990s, its population is still not characterised by high levels of education. According to the data of the 2011 census, the town fares better than the country and district average in terms of people

Figure 24: Kazincbarcika's population pyramid (2011)



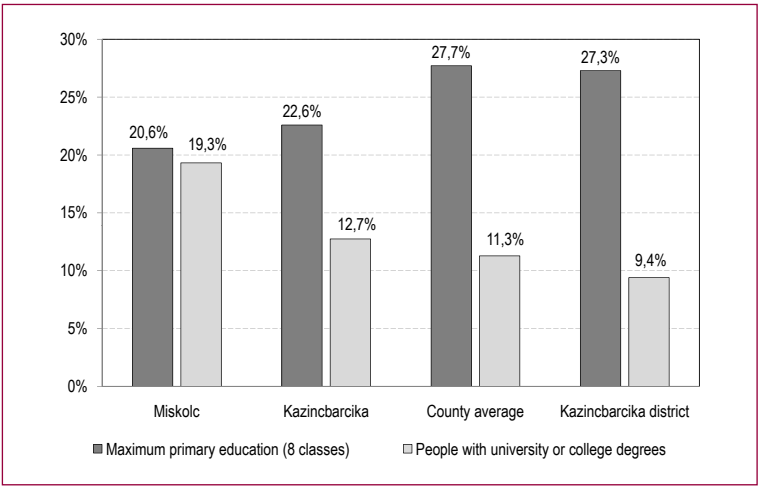

*Data source: CSO Census (2011)*

who only completed primary education (22.6%) and university or college graduates (12.7%), even though both indicators fall short of the levels in the county seat Miskolc *(Figure 25)*[1]. The spatial concentration of people with higher educational attainment shows remarkable spatial patterns. University and college graduates make up as much as 30.5% of the population in the previously mentioned villa district, 19.1% of the residents of high-status garden city-style suburban areas, and 16.6% of village-style suburban areas (while the 9.2% of the town centre is below the average) *(CSO Research Room, 2014)*.

In terms of its housing conditions and urban morphology, Kazincbarcika is a typical compact socialist town: its population density is one of the highest in the country at 798 people/km$^2$.

[1] Kazincbarcika's educational deficit compared to the county seat is most apparent in terms of higher education graduates, which is mainly due to Miskolc being a university town. (The University of Miskolc currently has 13.600 students.) Nonetheless, it is worth noting that Kazincbarcika's former Higher Technical Institute was reorganised as the Chemical Industrial Automation College of the Miskolc University of Heavy Industry in 1970, operating in the town until 1987.

Figure 25: The percentage of people who only completed primary education, and people with higher educational attainment in Miskolc, Kazincbarcika, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County and the Kazincbarcika district (2011)




*Data source: CSO Census (2011)*

(Miskolc, which was similarly strongly industrialised in the socialist period, stands at 688 people/km$^2$, while the town of Sárospatak – which had strong historical roots and ties to the church and was therefore less favoured after World War II – has a population density of only 94.2 people/km$^2$.) The specificities of new towns also appear in its housing stock: the amount of dwellings built before 1946 makes up only 2% of the total (this value is 10% in Miskolc and 20% in the historic Sárospatak), and of all residential buildings, the percentage of multi-storey buildings is 25% (while 11% in Miskolc and only 3.7% in Sárospatak). This architectural character is reflected in the average floor area per unit as well, which is 60 m$^2$ in Kazincbarcika, 65 m$^2$ in Miskolc, and 87 m$^2$ in Sárospatak. Additionally, historical determinations are also visible in the number of rooms per housing unit: while units with 4 or more rooms (which are typically home to affluent social groups) is much higher in Sárospatak (24%) than in Kazincbarcika (9%), the percentage of 2-room apartments (which mostly reflects the share of housing estates built in the socialist period) shows the opposite. In this category Kazincbarcika's share (61%) exceeds both that of Miskolc (47%) and Sárospatak (37%) *(CSO Census, 2011)*. Quite remarkably, more than half of

Kazincbarcika's population lives in housing estates, which even exceeds the 43.6% value of the complete new town sample *(Questionnaire survey, 2014)*.

## Economy and business environment

In the state socialist era, the town had a high percentage of industrial workers: in 1970, 67% of the labour force was employed in this sector, whereas this value was still 65% as late as in 1980 *(Sikos T. Ed., 1995, p. 13.)*. In the first years of the politico-economic transition, with socialism's mono-functional economic structure unravelling, many new local businesses appeared. In 2011, a significant number of businesses operated in the town, 2.396 in total, of which 1.575 were individual ones and 821 were joint ventures *(TeIR, 2011)*. As for the breakdown of these businesses by the scope of their activities, it is apparent that the local economy – once dominated by industry – significantly restructured since the socialist period. Today, as in other Hungarian towns and cities, tertiary (service) functions are on an increase in Kazincbarcika as well, although chemical industry still retains a special importance.

The Borsod Chemical Plant, founded in 1954 (practically at the same time as the town itself), was legally succeeded by BorsodChem Zrt. since 1991. The reformed company inherited *'bankruptcy from [its] predecessors',* 13 billion HUF of debt, and a *'disorganised company preparing for bankruptcy proceedings and liquidation' (BorsodChem, 1994, p. 1.)*. As a result, in the first years of transition the company was forced to rationalise production and to lay off many employees; although it had 7.000 employees in the late 1980s, this number dropped to 5.500 in 1991, and to only 3.700 in 1994 *(Sikos T. Ed., 1995, p. 19.)*. The situation was somewhat eased by the fact that an additional 500 people worked in spin-offs, and in so-called 'forced enterprises' employing 1–2 people, constituting a peculiar form of enterprises during the post-socialist transition. (The exceptionally high number of companies cited above is mostly due to this, although most of them were created and operated without prior experiences, managerial skills, and a sufficient amount of start-up capital.)

In the first half of the 1990s, the company's relationship with the town fundamentally changed. While previously BVK was a sig-

nificant sponsor of the town's culture, arts and sports life and also operated many of its institutions as a paternalistic gesture, this ceased after privatisation due to the company's shortage in financial resources. The town's prospects were further overshadowed by the fact that after four and a half decades of 'co-existence', Berente wished to become an independent municipality again. As the home to BorsodChem's premises, Berente already expressed their ambition to separate in 1993, which meant the restoration of the borders before the administrative unification in 1954. Their attempt was mostly motivated by the hope of receiving a higher share of business taxes from BorsodChem. In 1996, Berente's residents overwhelmingly voted for independence, resulting in the settlement – often nicknamed as 'Little Kuwait' in local vernacular – officially being declared independent in May 1999. Due to protracted litigation on the division of business taxes, the local governments of Kazincbarcika and Berente only settled out of court in 2007. Kazincbarcika was particularly hit hard by Berente's secession, as only 1/8$^{th}$ of the industrial park around BorsodChem remained on the administrative area of the town, the rest now belongs to Berente[2]. In addition, the 'settlement changing' BorsodChem's vicissitudes continued after the millennium as well: in 2000, 24.7% of the company's share was bought by Milford Holdings, an Irish-owned offshore company, and the stake – acquired in a Mergers & Acquisitions transaction – was sold to Vienna Capital Partners, a financial advisory and investment firm, and CIB Bank, the Hungarian subsidiary of Banca Commerciale Italiana. In 2006, through a leveraged buy-out, the company got into the ownership of a London-based private equity firm named Permira, from whom in the end Wanhua Group, one of China's leading chemical companies bought it in 2011, for 1.6 $ billion (with the significant financial support of a banking group led by

[2] According to the strategic agreement which concluded the litigation, Kazincbarcika handed over the area to Berente but in return *'for investments realised in the area in question after 2008, 50% of all local taxes (except property taxes) paid by the businesses to Berente must be paid by Berente's council to the local government of Kazincbarcika every year for a fixed term of 30 years beginning 1 January 2008'* (based on an interview with a council economic expert). Despite the agreement, Kazincbarcika has never received any taxes to date, as Berente claims that no new investments have been made in the area since that.

the Bank of China). The Chinese investor originally planned to build a new chemical plant in the Netherlands, however, instead decided to buy the indebted factory in Kazincbarcika. Prior to this, BorsodChem sought to lay off about 2.700 employees, so that the purchase essentially saved the long-existing chemical company[3].

Following the 2011 transaction, the company's condition consolidated. Later on, its position was further strengthened by a strategic partnership with the Government of Hungary, as well as by a strategic agreement between the company and the town of Kazincbarcika, both made in 2014. Under the strategic partnership agreement BorsodChem indicated to the government that Berente levied an excessive land tax (whereas in Kazincbarcika there is no land tax), which is – compared to the municipality's size and population – the highest in the country (the 25 fold value of the land). Partly due to this dissatisfaction, it is not surprising that the company does not provide any kinds of social contribution to Berente. On the other hand, however, maintaining a favourable relationship with BorsodChem appears to be a key issue for Kazincbarcika. Since the access to foreign direct investments turned out to be one of the main differentiating factors of economic prosperity during the post-socialist transition, the appearance of multinational and transnational corporations significantly reshaped local economies. The majority of the interviewees in Kazincbarcika clearly emphasised the role of multinational companies in the development of the town, while the residents were – somewhat surprisingly – on the opposite opinion; here, the company's positive impact on the development of the new town region was considered the least important of all new town regions surveyed *(Questionnaire survey, 2014)*.

In connection with Kazincbarcika's largest companies – and at the same time its largest current employers – *(Table 16),* it is essential to point out that in addition to BorsodChem Zrt., there are several other major local companies that are (or have been) closely

[3] There are other visible signs of this new kind of (Far Eastern) orientation in the town: the contemporary art creation of Gábor Miklós Szőke, a 13 metres long and 5 metres high Chinese dragon statue enriched the town in 2014. (The public space artwork was made in the spirit of the Chinese–Hungarian cooperation at the request of the town's administration, with the financial support of Wanhua Group and BorsodChem Zrt.)

Table 16: The largest companies of Kazincbarcika in 2015

| Company name | Owner's background | Number of employees (person) | Scope of activities |
|---|---|---|---|
| BorsodChem Zrt. | Chinese | 2.564 | Chemical industry |
| ÉRV Zrt. | Hungarian | 1.134 | Waterworks |
| Salzol Kft. | Hungarian | 160 | Work clothing manufacturing |
| Ongropack Kft. | Hungarian | 140 | Hard and soft PVC film production |
| Zöld Völgy Kft. | Hungarian | 130 | Waste management |
| BorsodChem MDI Termelő Kft. | Chinese | 123 | Production of chemical products |
| Framochem Kft. | American | 113 | Chemical industry |
| Ongrobau Kft. | Hungarian | 80 | Chemical building maintenance and implementation |
| Heinzler Gépgyártó Kft. | German | 77 | Mechanical engineering |
| Ongroelektro Kft. | Hungarian | 75 | Electrical instrument maintenance and implementation |
| Barcika Príma Kft. | Hungarian | 72 | Public meal service, catering |
| Barcika Art Kft. | Hungarian | 66 | Communication, culture, sport |
| Barcika Szolg Kft. | Hungarian | 66 | Real estate, district heating, industrial park |
| Barcika Park Kft. | Hungarian | 54 | Public employment, urban management, funerals, fish farming |
| ZVG Kft. | Hungarian | 54 | Pipelines, industrial equipment, manufacturing and installation of steel structures |
| Air-Liquide Kft. | French | 50 | Nitrogen, oxygen and hydrogen production, air breakdown |

*Source: Data collection of the Municipality of Kazincbarcika*

tied to the Chinese-owned company. These include Ongropack Kft., BorsodChem MDI Termelő Kft., the currently US-owned Framochem Kft., as well as many other smaller companies, so thus – rather indirectly – the number of employees connected to BorsodChem is also well above the 2.564 statistical value.

In the first years of the post-socialist transition, Borsod Power Plant, the town's other former major employer got into private ownership as well; it was purchased by AES, an American company in 1993. In 2011, only 120 people worked in the power plant of great historic past (at that time it was owned by a Ukrainian company); then the owner became insolvent and the company was liquidated in the same year. In addition to the thermal power plant, the Foam Silk Knitwear Factory – an industrial plant created in 1968 in the spirit of economic reform – was also a major local employer. It was privatised in 1994, becoming the property of the German Kübler Group. Under their leadership, the construction of a modern plant started as a greenfield investment north of the town, which is now operating with 160 employees under the name Salzol; its main profile is the manufacturing of protective equipment and work clothing (especially for BorsodChem and Suzuki).

In addition to these top employers of Kazincbarcika, the companies of the local municipality are of major importance as well (both within and around the town, in its wider surroundings): four of these companies are listed among the largest ones (Barcika Príma Kft., Barcika Art Kft., Barcika Szolg Kft., Barcika Park Kft.), with a total staff of 258 employees[4]. The empirical survey shows that among all new town regions, Kazincbarcika and its region has the highest proportion of people employed in municipal companies *(Questionnaire survey, 2014)*. All of this is consistent with the increasingly fast-paced neoliberalisation of Hungarian urban governance, in which the former 'managerial' approach is gradually replaced by an entrepreneurial approach of urban management *(Harvey, 1989)*, organising more and more local government tasks in market-(and profit-)oriented forms.

After the turn of the millennia, the influx of various creative urban policies into capitalist semi-peripheries is just another characteristic urban process (in the case of Hungary, see the recapitulation by *Czirfusz, 2013*). The most prominent example of this phenomenon in Kazincbarcika is the so-called 'KolorCity' initiative, and particularly the 'Coloured Walls' programme as part of it,

[4] All in all, currently the local municipality (including the network of its institutions) is the largest employer in Kazincbarcika; a total number of approx. 3.200 people work in its public institutions and business associations *(Váradi, 2013)*.

under which the facades of 30 residential and public buildings have been renewed with large-scale artworks between 2013–2016. This project, entitled 'The Job-Creating Development of Kazincbarcika and its Catchment Area', is financed by the 'Swiss Contribution to the Enlarged Europe – Co-operation Programme with Hungary'; it is jointly implemented with three nearby settlements (Bánhorváti, Rudabánya and Sajókaza) and its important local actor is Barcika Art Kft., one of the previously mentioned municipal enterprises. Beyond the wall paintings and other creative activities (such as guerrilla crocheting on tree trunks, or setting up giant print installations in the town centre), the organisation of an annual summer music festival ('KolorFeszt'), as well as a local business incentive programme are also parts of the project. In the latter case, the organisers mainly expected IT firms and creative craft enterprises (initially with little success), however, in a rather general sense, they consider the re-branding of Kazincbarcika as highly important as well. With such a new image and brand for the town, i.e. by placing the emphasis on the 'colourfulness' of Kazincbarcika (instead of dullness and monotony), they hope to attract further investors in the near future[5].

Established as part of the Swiss Contribution project, the enterprise development fund has contributed to the above-mentioned goals with 234 million HUF so far, and in 2016, it is accompanied by an investment promotion ordinance prepared by the local municipality. As these efforts illustrate, the leadership of the town handles employment growth as a priority task, even if Kazincbarcika is in a better position regarding the share of employees (38.1%) than the average of Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County (33.8%) *(CSO Census, 2011)*. The intra-urban spatial distribution of those being employed, however, shows remarkable disparities. The highest proportion of wage earners is concentrated in the town's high-status residential areas (in the villa quarter 43.9% of the population, in the high-status suburban family housing zones 41.8% of the population is employed), while the unemployed are mostly residents of the extremely low status enclosed garden areas and of low-status housing estates *(CSO Research Room, 2014)*. Although the unem-

[5] Based on an interview with a municipal economic specialist.

ployment rate of Kazincbarcika (16.6%) is slightly better than the county average (18.4%) according to the data of the 2011 census, still it has to be underlined that within the full sample of new town regions, the region of Kazincbarcika has the highest proportion of people (59.9%) who have ever experienced unemployment[6] *(Questionnaire survey, 2014).*

## Social polarisation

The new town's society has always been characterised by a sort of social polarisation since its foundation, as – apart from the predecessor settlements' grassroots families – the inhabitants of the town were all newly arrived 'strangers' in the beginning. The newcomers, mostly arriving from the country's poor regions, brought with themselves their rather diverse cultural and socialisation patterns. In this way, the town under construction *'attracted not only people seeking for better life through honest work but also fortune hunters, adventurers, and even prostitutes' (Csurák, 2004, p. 82.),* moreover – as it is written in the works of early local history – the town's public security was also in a disastrous condition. In this diversity, which has been a characteristic feature since the beginnings, keeping up with the pace of industrial production was the only certain point, the termination of which has led to a profound social crisis of values, and later on to different types of deviance to become a mass phenomenon.

During the 1990s, homelessness, a previously non-existent phenomenon appeared, and among those who lost their homes – in addition to single, unemployed middle-aged males – it is the elderly who represent an increasing proportion *(Messing–Molnár, 2010, p. 26.).* The gradual erosion of local society is also shown by the fact that of all the new town regions involved in the empirical research it was the region of Kazincbarcika where the proportion of divorced people was the highest; almost one quarter of families are affected by this *(Questionnaire survey, 2014).*

[6] During the first half of the 1990s, the town's unemployment rate regularly exceeded 30%, whereas in the second half of the decade, it only ranged between 10–15% *(Messing–Molnár, 2010, p. 24.).* The lower numbers, however, presumably may also result from many of the citizens' early retirement or disability retirement in order to escape unemployment.

The local Roma population, living in the town in a significant number (estimated to be approx. 4.500–5.000 people), is a group hit by complex labour market and housing market discrimination[7]. Before 1990, there was a broad array of local employment opportunities for the Roma in Kazincbarcika (mainly in construction industry, and partly in the Borsod Chemical Plant), however, as a result of the structural crisis of the first years of the post-socialist transition, job opportunities were narrowing, and it was the Roma who first lost their jobs. The massive unemployment for the majority of the Roma population has usually been coupled with lower levels of educational attainment, which led to rapid social amortisation (divorces, alcohol dependence etc.).

The strongest and the most visible form of the current polarisation of urban society is the spatial segregation of low status (and at the same time mostly Roma) population. Based on the data of the 2011 census, the Central Statistical Office marked altogether 5 segregated areas and areas at risk of segregation in Kazincbarcika *(Map 12),* a relatively significant number especially for such a settlement size. Out of these areas three are defined as segregated areas[8], two of which are located in the southern part of the town (1, 2) and one is west of the town centre (3), right in its near proximity. Their common characteristics include a high proportion of children (aged 14 years and under), an outstanding share of low-skilled people, high unemployment rate and low employment rate, and a higher ratio of no comfort and single-room apartments. In addition to these three segregated areas, there are two other areas at risk of segregation[9] as well, one of which is situated in the north-eastern fringe of the town (4), while the other one consists of enclosed garden areas in the outskirts.

With its 370 inhabitants, the so-called Herbolya Old-settlement is the town's oldest segregated area with the worst housing condi-

[7] Based on an interview with a local minority government official. In addition, sociological research dealing with the Roma minority of Kazincbarcika also confirms this opinion (see e.g. *Messing–Molnár, 2010*).

[8] By the definition of the 314/2012 (XI. 8) Government Decree, segregated areas are residential areas with at least 50 inhabitants with a segregation index of above 35% rate, calculated on the ratio of people with maximum primary level educational attainment and of working-age with no regular employment income.

[9] Areas at risk of segregation are residential areas with at least 50 inhabitants with a segregation index value, calculated as previously described, exceeding 30%.

Map 12: Segregated areas and areas at risk of segregation in Kazincbarcika in 2015


*Source: Integrated Urban Development Strategy of Kazincbarcika (2015, p. 79.)*

tions (indicated by number 1 on the map). The deterioration of these so-called 'CS-houses' (houses with reduced comfort level) started already in the state socialist era, as early as in the 1970s[10]. At that time, the houses here used to function as the emergency rental houses of the town council as well, where people who were forced to move out of their homes (due to high rental debts or other reasons by court judgment) got housing. Subsequently, from 1990 onwards, another specific form of fluctuation also started in the town, which drove the residents of Kazincbarcika's other segregated areas (e.g. Hámán Kató Street) to continuously move here, to Herbolya Old-settlement. The main reason for this is that these wood-heated CS-housing properties were significant-

[10] Based on an interview with a municipal officer. It is important to point out that in the same period the town's areas with rather rural character – i.e. the core areas of the former villages – were not considered as low-status areas because their residents were able to earn extra incomes through various activities associated with the socialist 'second economy' (for instance animal husbandry and plant cultivation).

ly cheaper to maintain compared than gas-heated housing estate flats. As a result, the small and unsanitary houses of Herbolya Old-settlement for most people meant the final station from which it was impossible to move to a 'cheaper' place, so this area has been conserved as the town's most ill-famed segregated area. As the 2015 Integrated Urban Development Strategy (ITS) reports, in 2011 70.4% of the people living here had no jobs, 53.2% had basic schooling, and the rate of no comfort, semi-comfort and emergency housing units was quite outstanding with 78.6% of all the houses inhabited.

During the European Union's 2007–2013 funding cycle, a social urban rehabilitation programme was carried out in Herbolya Old-settlement (between 2011 and 2013). As part of it, a park and a playground has been created, a community building project (including family support), utility improvements and road modernisation programmes have been implemented. Furthermore, adult education programmes and a volunteer vigilante movement have been established, several sports events, information and awareness programmes were conducted, along with a broad range of other activities including garbage collection, flower planting, information forum for prospective mothers about healthy child care, infectious diseases etc. *(The Economic Programme of Kazincbarcika 2015–2019, 2015)*. The programme continues in the current 2014–2020 period as well, and is aimed at the redevelopment of properties in the worst condition. The results of the socially sensitive urban rehabilitation of Herbolya Old-settlement achieved so far are, however, not unanimously evaluated by the locals[11]; while a number of ideas (e.g. the public-laundry) are consensually considered as helpful and as a good initiative, on the other hand, for instance in connection with the sewage canalisation network it was highlighted that although it was built up in the local streets, the houses in the majority of cases were eventually not connected to it.

In addition to Herbolya Old-settlement, the other most ill-famed residential area of Kazincbarcika is undoubtedly Hámán Kató Road and its surroundings, a segregated area with 928 inhabitants (marked by number 3 on the map). Even though it was initially con-

[11] Based on an interview with a local minority government official.

sidered as a kind of 'model housing estate' inhabited by engineers, teachers, doctors etc., the gradual deterioration – and finally, the partial demolition – of the buildings is the outcome of rather complex factors. From the turn of the 1970s and 1980s, many people living in riverside slums and low-status miners' colonies became homeless due to the floods of River Sajó, and since the housing policy of the socialist era was characterised by centralised housing allocation, they received flats in Hámán Kató Road, originally inhabited by middle and higher status groups. Even after the beginning of the politico-economic transition, most of the housing stock in this area was not privatised, it remained in municipal ownership. Subsequently, the built environment was deteriorating at a significantly accelerating pace; as the majority of low-skilled (mostly Roma) residents had lost their previously stable jobs, they were unable to maintain their flats. After 1990, a rapid selective outmigration began; the more affluent and non-Roma residents gradually moved out of Hámán Kató Road and the surrounding streets. As the 2015 Integrated Urban Development Strategy (ITS) reports, in 2011 68.4% of the people living here had no job, 50.3% had basic schooling, and the rate of no comfort, semi-comfort and emergency flats was 46.7% of all the houses inhabited. A municipal resolution on the demolition of the four-storey buildings on the odd numbered side of the street (also owned by the local government) was passed in 2014 and by the end of 2015, the buildings had already been pulled down. The area's other major problems include public utility arrears; until the start of the demolitions, 300 million HUF of arrears arose which the municipality was unable to levy.

As a recent phenomenon in the wake of the economic crisis, besides these two large segregated areas (along with a smaller one with 86 residents, marked with number 2 on the map), several of Kazincbarcika'a low status residents tend to move out to the town's hilly enclosed garden areas as well. For many people, this strategy was a rational decision taken 'just in time' (i.e. before complete impoverishment); even though it has been ongoing since 1990, however, has become a mass phenomenon during the period of the financial crisis[12]. In Vécsetál-farm, marked as an area at

[12] Based on interviews with a municipal government official and a local church leader.

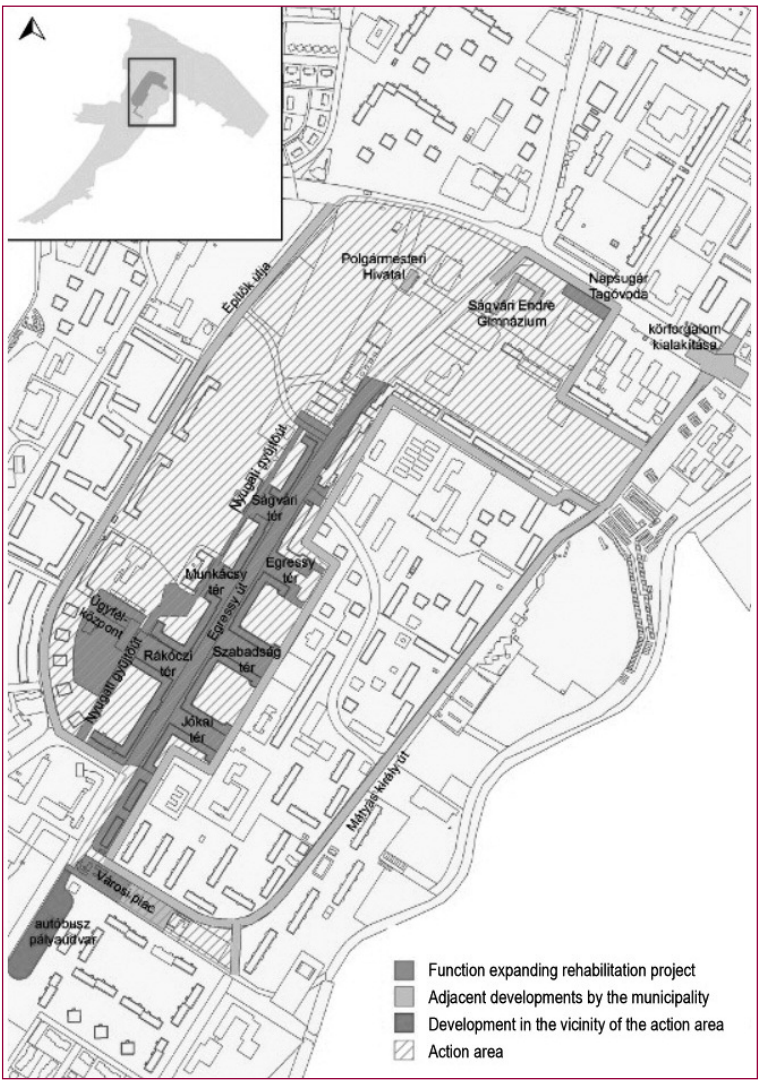
risk of segregation in the Integrated Urban Development Strategy in 2011, 76.2% of the residents had no jobs, 38.8% had basic schooling, and the rate of people living in no comfort, semi-comfort and emergency housing was quite outstanding with a rate of 94.9% *(Integrated Settlement Development Strategy of Kazincbarcika, 2015, p. 85.)*. In addition to Vécsetál-farm, further enclosed garden areas are also involved in this process, mainly the wine cellars area located south-east of the boating lake (in the eastern part of the town). Common features of these outskirt areas include not only unfavourable housing conditions and educational deficits but also the over-representation of male population (60.4%), as well as the highest proportion of Roma population (21.7%) *(CSO Research Room, 2014)*.

As a specific 'counterpoint' of the above-described phenomenon, the segregation of high status social groups in Kazincbarcika can also be identified in the outskirts[13]. On one hand, such a prestigious residential area has been Rózsadomb ('Rose Hill') on the western part of the town from the 1980s onwards (situated within the so-called New Garden City), inhabited by doctors, engineers and later on by entrepreneurs, and on the other hand, a 'villa quarter' formed after 1990 along the Tardona Creek, north-east of Herbolya. Besides the segregation of low and high status residents in the outskirt, however, it is important to emphasise that the town centre (Egressy Road and the adjacent squares) also undergone significant changes in the recent years, due to the ongoing urban regeneration programme *(Map 13)*.

Similarly to the experiences gained in Dunaújváros *(Szirmai, 1988),* sociological research even in the 1980s revealed the separation of so-called 'elite staircases' in the case of the centre of Kazincbarcika as well (see *Andor–Hidy, 1987, pp. 22–23.*), however, after 1990 this central part could not maintain its high (elite) status. During the years of the post-socialist transition, both the built environment and the quality of local services gradually deteriorated, and the area could less and less perform the role of a real, functional (and at the same time symbolic and representative) centre, so that its function expanding rehabilitation seemed a justifiable

[13] In Hungarian socialist new towns, affluent citizens typically live in the outer parts (the 'outskirts') of new towns *(Questionnaire survey, 2014)*.

Map 13: The action area of the function expanding rehabilitation of the town centre




*Source: Kazincbarcika 'Town Centre' Action Area Plan (2010, p. 10.)*

decision. The four major project elements of the first phase of town centre rehabilitation (carried out between 2011 and 2013) were (1) the reconstruction of the terrace and ramp system in Egressy Road, (2) the renovation of Egressy Road and six squares opening from there (Rákóczi, Munkácsy, Ságvári, Szabadság and Egressy squares), (3) providing Újváros Primary School with new

functions, and (4) the construction of Nyugati collector road. As a result of the project, the previously one-way track Egressy Road has been transformed into a pedestrian street (completely blocked from traffic), and new pavement cover and fountains have been built on the renovated squares.

The rehabilitation programme continues with a second phase, however, after the completion of the first one it is seen that the shops and services of Egressy Road and the nearby squares (household article shops, second-hand clothing stores, food stores etc.) are currently far from being such high standard to be worth speaking about the gentrification of the area. The interviewees seemed to agree that the rehabilitation project has not increased the prices of local services in the centre of the town, and real estate prices have not increased significantly either. Nevertheless, it is important to emphasise that the centre is one of the Kazincbarcika's most ageing residential areas *(CSO Research Room, 2014);* hence, in a few years, the replacement of inhabitants may be expected, presumably with residents of higher social status.

As shown on the example of the two (social and function expanding) urban rehabilitation programmes, Kazincbarcika (like the vast majority of medium-sized and large Hungarian cities including the capital) implements urban development projects mostly financed by the European Union. At the same time, however, it is somewhat paradoxical that while the rehabilitation of the town centre was realised from 1.167 billion HUF (of which 927 million HUF was subsidisation), and the Swiss Contribution's total project amount was 1.496 billion HUF (of which 1.172 billion HUF was subsidisation), the overall budget for the social urban rehabilitation programme – that would be more capable of substantially reducing social polarisation – was far less, 521 million HUF (of which 409 million HUF was subsidisation)[14]; in fact, a portion of this amount was even used for demolitions which is hardly compatible with the basic principles of social urban rehabilitation.

Finally, in addition to the European Union and the Swiss Contribution, the role of local churches (as important actors) is also necessary to point out, partly because their attempts to reduce the

[14] The source of project amounts: *The Economic Programme of Kazincbarcika 2015–2019 (2015, pp. 47–49.)*

level of social polarisation has been significant even before the social urban rehabilitation programme started. Since the first half of the 1990s and onwards, the churches have continually been present in both Herbolya and Hámán Kató Road, and even in the enclosed garden areas in the outskirts, they regularly donate food, shoes, clothes etc. Currently 5 out of the town's 20 educational institutions are run by the church; the Roman Catholic Church maintains one institution (which is a primary school, a vocational school, a secondary technical school and a dorm all-in-one), the Reformed Church runs two institutions (a primary school and a vocational school with a dorm), the Salesians of Don Bosco maintain a high school, while the Greek Catholic Church runs a nursery. Apart from these important educational and charitable roles, according to the interview with the leader of one of the local churches, in terms of religious life Kazincbarcika can still be regarded as a 'socialist new town', with low level of religiosity and with a significantly decreasing number of believers since the beginning of the politico-economic transition. This might be just another specific sign of the general value crisis mentioned at the beginning of this subsection.

## Polarisation processes of the new town region

Not unlike the roots of several other current conflicts, the main underlying reason for the wide developmental gap between Kazincbarcika and its immediate surroundings should also be sought in the state socialist past. As a beneficiary industrial town of a beneficiary industrial region, Kazincbarcika enjoyed the benefits of centralised redistribution for nearly four decades; at the same time, however, it is evident that maintaining such prestige investments was only possible at the expense of a systematic withdrawal of resources from other regions. While thousands of apartments were built in Kazincbarcika under various forms of subsidisation (governmental support, housing associations, service apartments), housing loans were unavailable in the surrounding villages for a long time. Similarly, while many new classrooms were built in the schools of the new town, several elementary schools were shut down by political ordinances in the neighbouring villages *(Sikos T. Ed., 1995)*. The end of this privileged position not only caused an 'unusual' situation for the leaders and the popula-

tion of the new town, but also reinforced the striking disparities between the new town and its region. Furthermore, this gap is not likely to change in the short or medium run either.

The highly disadvantaged position of the villages in the new town region becomes especially apparent when comparing the complex developmental ranks[15] of the socialist new towns investigated in the book with the settlements of the Kazincbarcika district *(Table 17).* According to this ranking even Kazincbarcika, one of the 'laggards' among new towns (preceding only Komló and Ózd), stands out high among its surrounding settlements. In terms of developmental level, only Sajóivánka and Berente (the latter hosting BorsodChem) are closing up to the new town; they are followed by Tardona which is on the same level as Komló, while a significant proportion of the district's villages (e.g. Sajókaza, Alsótelekes, Felsőtelekes, Ormosbánya) belongs to the poorest settlements of Hungary.

Inauspicious demographic processes, especially the long-term population decline undoubtedly plays an important role in the conservation of the underdevelopment of the new town region. As part of this trend, outward migration is of key importance besides natural decrease *(Figure 26),* which has also been hitting the region for a long time. (Between 2001 and 2011, only a few villages in the district had a positive migration balance, and only Sajókaza witnessed natural growth). It has been observed for decades, and affects especially active adult groups (aged 20–40); moreover, it is typically people with higher educational attainment who are more likely to wander away. However, the issue of migration affects Kazincbarcika in two directions; on the one hand, educated and economically active generations move to the more liveable neighbouring villages (e.g. to Sajóivánka), while Roma population of the surrounding villages tend to migrate to the new town in hope of an easier life[16].

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15 Taking into account all municipalities of Hungary, this complex developmental ranking is based on 30 (social, economic and infrastructural) indicators; its methodology is described in the study of *Faluvégi–Tipold (2012).* For the complete list of settlements, see http://www.budaors.hu/?module=news& action=show&nid=182806

16 Based on an interview with a municipality official.

Table 17: Social, economic and infrastructural developmental ranking of Hungarian socialist new towns (left), and the settlements of the Kazincbarcika district (right) (2011)

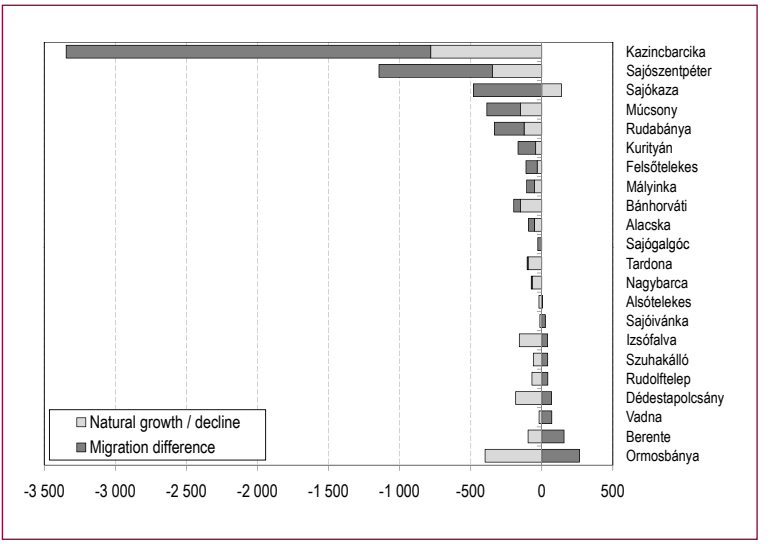
| Socialist new towns | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Rank** | **Name** | **K avg** |
| 18 | Százhalombatta | 7.70 |
| 58 | Tiszaújváros | 7.33 |
| 79 | Paks | 7.15 |
| 117 | Dunaújváros | 6.95 |
| 183 | Tatabánya | 6.71 |
| 338 | Oroszlány | 6.34 |
| 373 | Várpalota | 6.25 |
| 457 | Ajka | 6.11 |
| **572** | **Kazincbarcika** | **5.93** |
| 1129 | Komló | 5.26 |
| 2155 | Ózd | 4.17 |

| Kazincbarcika district | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Rank** | **Name** | **K avg** |
| **572** | **Kazincbarcika** | **5.93** |
| 691 | Sajóivánka | 5.77 |
| 875 | Berente | 5.54 |
| 1117 | Tardona | 5.27 |
| 1374 | Kurityán | 5.00 |
| 1461 | Vadna | 4.92 |
| 1506 | Dédestapolcsány | 4.88 |
| 1531 | Sajógalgóc | 4.85 |
| 1562 | Sajószentpéter | 4.80 |
| 1599 | Mályinka | 4.76 |
| 1710 | Múcsony | 4.65 |
| 1757 | Bánhorváti | 4.59 |
| 1807 | Rudolftelep | 4.54 |
| 1830 | Nagybarca | 4.52 |
| 1974 | Izsófalva | 4.36 |
| 2017 | Szuhakálló | 4.32 |
| 2114 | Rudabánya | 4.21 |
| 2190 | Alacska | 4.13 |
| 2484 | Ormosbánya | 3.75 |
| 2551 | Felsőtelekes | 3.65 |
| 2682 | Alsótelekes | 3.44 |
| 2752 | Sajókaza | 3.32 |

*Data source: CSO data, complex index based on the 67/2001 (VI.28.) Parliamentary Resolution*

In absence of local employment opportunities in their own villages, the majority of people who have not left the county and the district during the past decades are now forced to commute for their daily livelihood, several of them to the district seat, Kazincbarcika. Already in 1990, a substantial proportion of people commuted to the new town from the nearby towns including Edelény, Sajószentpéter, Szendrő, and even from Ózd and Miskolc; their rate is currently 40% of all employees of Kazincbarcika *(CSO Census, 2011)*. The commuters – primarily those employed in

Figure 26: Natural population change (growth / decline) and migration difference in the municipalities of the Kazincbarcika district between 2001 and 2011 (capita)




*Data source: CSO Census (2011)*

BorsodChem – are attracted from the new town's 15–20 km zone (more than 20 settlements), while commuters from Miskolc mostly work either for the local municipality or the companies associated with it. In the case of the county seat, there is significant work-related commuting in the reverse direction as well, since the Miskolc branch of Bosch Group (a large German electric hand tool manufacturing company) attracts many workers from Kazincbarcika and its surrounding area as well[17]. According to the data of the 2011 census, the overall number of commuters to Kazincbarcika was 5.005 people, while the number of those commuting from the new town was less, 3.288 people.

Finally, concerning the income conditions of Kazincbarcika's new town region, the incomes of its settlements are 22–25% below the national average, while the costs of living here are only 8–10% lower than the national average (*Váradi, 2013,* based on the data of the National Tax and Customs Office). Besides that, the area's peripheral position and developmental deficits are also

[17] Based on an interview with a municipality official.

illustrated by the fact that the proportion of households in the lowest income category within the entire new town regions sample is the highest in the region of Kazincbarcika; here, 41.3% of all households have a monthly income of less than 150.000 HUF *(Questionnaire survey, 2014)*.

## Conclusions

To recapitulate the main processes outlined in the chapter, it can be stated that after four decades of a privileged (socialist) urban development trajectory Kazincbarcika has undergone shock-like changes during the 1990s and most part of the 2000s. Since the beginning of the 2010s, for the second time in its history, it is mostly dependent on external sources again; the new town's current development is predominantly based on capital investment from China on the one hand, as well as on the funding of the European Union and the Swiss Contribution on the other hand.

Regarding the principal trends of social polarisation, the spatial segregation of both high-status and low-status groups is on an increase. Better-off social groups typically reside in the villa quarters emerged from the late 1980s and early 1990s, while a great number of low-status inhabitants live not only in the segregated areas of Herbolya Old-settlement and the Hámán Kató Road neighbourhood, but – due to the economic crisis – they also move into the outskirts districts and enclosed garden areas of the town. Simultaneously, as a consequence of the urban rehabilitation programmes carried out in the town centre (mainly financed by the European Union), the replacement of its current (elderly) population and – even if indirectly – a slow but gradual process of 'middle-classification' of the centre can be forecasted.

# The Former "New Socialist City" in the Neoliberal Condition – The Case of Tychy in Poland

Grzegorz Węcławowicz – Dagmara Mliczyńska-Hajda

## Introduction

The post-socialist heritage of the cities of East-Central Europe, particularly after 1989, became the source of several economic and social problems which generated constraints and obstacles for their future development. Tychy, however, while featuring all the typical elements of socialist legacy, represents a relatively good standard of living (in regional context) and remains a competitive, prosperous and attractive place for living.

So the question arises which former elements contributed to the prosperity of the city, and which new democratic and liberal concepts have had the most important impacts. The main research question concerns the explanation of how this post-socialist city has been adapting to the contemporary political, social and economic conditions and to the challenges of the future.

The study has been realised within the confines of the research entitled "Social Polarisation in the Hungarian and Eastern-Central European 'New Town' Regions: Impacts of Transition and Globalisation" (K 106169), funded by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office.

Map 14: Tychy – the current division of the city into districts, settlements and estates with indication of the downtown area


*Source: Studium, 2013*

## New town concepts versus the concept of the socialist city

The new town of Tychy was designated in October 1950, by a governmental decree that followed the principles of the Upper Silesian Industrial Centre's regional plan [GOP][1]. The general aim was to re-establish the industrial production ability of the core area of Upper Silesia, which was destroyed during World War II. This strongly urbanised area concentrated the traditional heavy industry and mining and was responsible for serious environmen-

[1] Also called as the master economic plan of the Upper Silesian Industrial Region (GOP –Górnośląski Okręg Przemysłowy). One of the important elements of such a plan concerns the formation of several satellite towns around the core "black country" – the coal basin area is already densely populated and concentrates old industrial infrastructure and a high level of environmental pollution.

tal pollution. For example, large wasted and polluted areas remaining from the mining activities contributed to the environmental deterioration of existing settlements. So the next priority of this regional plan was to create a sort of surrounding "suburban zone" which will be devoted to new and better housing and modern industry. Such a policy, named as "de-glomeration" represents the ideological background for the location of new cities and housing estates (like Tychy, Pyskowice, Tarnowskie Góry, Zabkowice).

Subsequent development took place in the rural areas south to Katowice, near the small town of Tychy, which received the municipal right in 1934, and had a population of 10,000 inhabitants. The basic urban planning instrument was a spatial master plan (formulated in 1953, while the construction started in 1950) of a rigid urban composition based on geometrical axes, that was initially targeted towards a population of 120,000 inhabitants *(Wejchert, 1970, p. 23.)*. This town, from the very beginnings has been designed as a socialist city, although, with the passage of time, not all the assumptions of the original plan were fully implemented. The main modification concerns the delay in service infrastructure provision, increasing the scale of buildings (blocks of flats) and the size of housing estates, the change of construction technologies and materials from traditional ones toward more and more prefabricated ones. While the master plan was completed in 1953, the construction of the first housing complex called 'A' (built in the typical socialist realistic style for around 6,000 inhabitants) started a year earlier *(Adamczewska–Wejhert, 1985, p. 75.)*, which can be ironically regarded as a symptom of the proficiency of the socialistic centralised planning.

Rapid expansion of the city caused changes in the administrative boundaries several times by including adjacent rural areas. In addition, the first decades of city development were often shaped by ad hoc decisions that bypassed regional planning decisions. In 1964 the central government completely stopped the development of the city, directing the potential of (state owned) building companies for the reconstruction of housing in other cities. This halted the construction of new cities in Poland till 1971 when it was resumed, but in the 1970s only apartments without service facilities were built causing substantial shortage *(Nowakowski, 2013)*.

Nevertheless, as M. S. Szczepański writes *(1993, p. 2.)* the city of Tychy was created as the embodiment of the new socialist principles of urbanisation and architecture. The new city of Tychy (together with Jastrzębie Zdrój located in the southern part of Silesia and the new town of Nowa Huta, erected near Cracow) was used by the authorities to reinforce the supremacy of socialism as a political system as well as a progressive urban culture. The new city of Tychy is described as probably the most successful example of post-war urban development in Poland *(Golany, 1976, p. 94.)*.

The contemporary townscape of Tychy consists of a broad range of formal architectural solutions, from historical to post-modernistic and fashionable up-today ones *(Lipok–Bierwiaczonek, 2014, p. 24.)* but the preserved composition of the first spatial master plan, grounded on a strict geometrical concept of a large scale, dominative centre surrounded by numerous massive satellite housing complexes, still and clearly reminds us of its conceptual fundament: the city is the prime emblem of (socialist) progress. Since 1952 the city has been under constant construction, the master plan has been, and still is, verified but its basic concept, as S. Gzell noticed (2000), have remained unchanged (however, due to the administrative interventions, certain elements were caricaturised).

The prime assumption was that the city should differ from the 19th century capitalist town. The International Congresses of Modern Architecture (CIAM: 1928-1959) advanced the cause of 'architecture as a social art' by promoting the architectural principles of the Modern Movement (later called modernism). Architecture was considered a political tool that should be used to improve the world, basically through the design of buildings and through urban planning. The contradiction between the old and the new approach to design, architecture and city planning was also expressed by vocabulary – a modern city was called the new city. The city of Tychy – as it is named today – was from 1951 to 1973 called 'the New Tychy'. Pre-fixed by the adjective new qualifies the city as a modernistic one, and today explains why since the beginning of the 1980s criticism of 'Nowe Tychy' (the New Tychy) has become in Poland a vivid tradition. Nevertheless, as remarked by S. Gzell (2000), the city of Nowe Tychy still belongs to the same group as the new British cities, Stockholm's satellites and the city of Brasilia.

There is a common agreement that the location of the city was decided according to the political decision of the communists to

produce better living conditions for the working class labour force of the Upper Silesian old industrial region. The region was formed under former capitalist regimes. As a result, according to the first deep research on Tychy as a socialist city *M. S. Szczepański (1993, p. 1.)* claims that this city "… served as a model of how to solve the housing problems in a socialist society". In general, the original concept, based on the Charter of Athens, at the beginning (1950s) modified the function of the new city by limiting it to housing and recreation and treating the new town as a dormitory of Katowice or its satellite *(Szczepański, 1993)*.

The rationalities behind the location of the new town close to old Tychy was based on several factors. Among them the most important was the convenient accessibility of the existing coal mines in the region for future labour force, the lack of the damaging impact of mining (popular in other Silesian industrial cities), low air pollution and much better environmental conditions, good access to potential recreational areas (Pszczyńskie forest, and Lake Paprocany), open and unconstrained space for planning and new constructions.

## The industrial city as the model for the socialist city

In Poland, parallel to the ideas of the socialist city, a concept of social housing estates *(Brukalska, 1948)* has become very famous. Social housing estates were considered as an instrument of social change and especially to improve the living conditions of the working class *(Syrkus, 1976)*. The implementation of this concept of housing in the Polish cities after World War II resulted that almost all urban development was carried out nearly exclusively in the form of such a housing estate. Virtually every town had its "socialist" quarter, consisting of post-war housing estates (communal or cooperative) or groups of settlements. The most typical socialist town was Tychy, created almost from scratch in the period of real socialism. At the end of the eighties, which also marks the end of real socialism in Poland, the city was rated by some as an urban wonder of the world, and by others as a concrete slum *(Szczepanski, 1991)*.

## *The national and regional context*

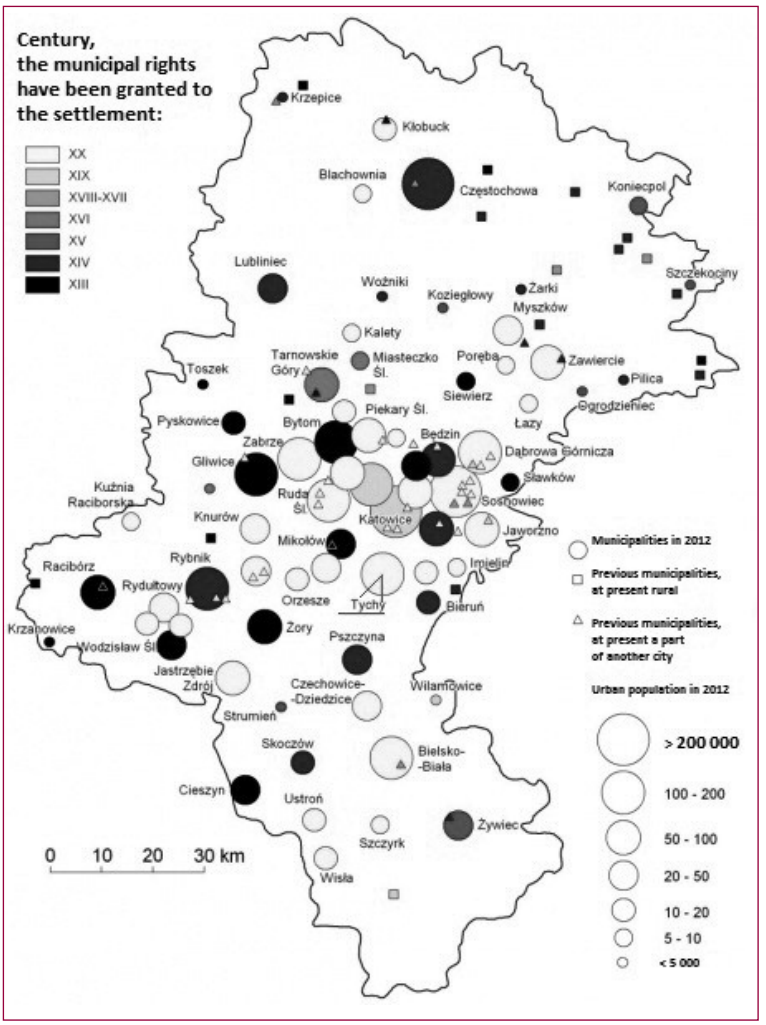
Silesia (voivodeship) covers the area of 12 331 km$^2$, and is inhabited by over 4.7 million people, which represents 12.4% of the total Polish population, hence it is Poland's most urbanised and densely populated region. The geographical location of Silesia combined with its resources, both natural and anthropogenic, has a big impact on the formation of socio-economic processes and settlement structure. As far as the regional context is concerned, an analytical description of the socio-economic transition of the Silesian region, was given by J. Runge (2009), who underlines the observed evident aberrations from theoretical concepts of social-economic transformations, as well the specific characteristics of the regional urban structure of the area (such as cities losing their spatial integrity, becoming amorphous organisms).

The urban structure of the region clearly differs from the typical urban structures of contemporary Poland, mainly due to the historical conditions. The process of urbanisation in Silesian Voivodship (i.e. the Upper Silesia) was bolstered in the middle ages in two phases: a decisive in the 13$^{th}$ century and a complementary in the 14$^{th}$ and 15$^{th}$ centuries (the creation of so called 'new towns') and then it was again strongly intensified in the period of the industrial revolution *(Map 15)*.

The pathways of economic growth and regional development in transition economies are strongly influenced by national and regional policies. The scale and dynamics of socio-economic transformation were fuelled by economic globalisation, that for more than three decades has been transgressing the national boundaries. But, as has been noticed by Krtička (2013), the local comparative advantages of post-industrial cities, like low production costs and relatively high skilled workforce were generally not sufficient for establishing long-term economic growth and competitiveness without a necessary political (structural) support, on national (and sometimes also on regional) level.

The case of Tychy well exemplifies the dependences of the recognised urban development pathway regulated by both levels of governance, the national and regional one. Due to the fact that the contemporary structure of regional self-government was legally introduced almost a decade later (1998) then the local one (1990), the dependences of policies on the state seem to be more

Map 15: Distribution, genesis and the demographic size of the cities of the Silesia region




*Source: Based on the map published by Silesian Encyclopedia – http://ibrbs.pl/mediawiki/index.php/Plik:Miasta_mapa1.jpg*

significant, at least before the accession to EU (2004). According to the results of the econometric research by E & Y *(Raport, 2011, p. 40.)* the establishing of SEZ branch in Tychy, may be regarded as the key factor of the city's current economic stability. Hence, the Bill of SEZ (1994), that grounded the national system of special economic zones, shall be regarded as the most important impact on the development of Tychy executed on national level after 1989.

## *Tychy as a socialist city in the period of socialism*

Imposed ideological priorities in the architecture and spatial structure of the city did not lead to the formation of local communities or to identifying with the city or neighbourhoods. M.S. Szczepanski's investigation of that time reveals some of the social consequences which were reflected in the spatial differentiations that distinguish socialist cities from the towns formed in Western Europe (in the second half of the twentieth century). Essential features of socialist cities include the irrational and wasteful use of space; the existence of over intensively used areas (for example, housing estates) together with empty spaces as a reserve for future expansion. This caused a spontaneous appropriation of space, especially public space, by some social groups, expanding the "self", e.g. by creating home gardens *(Szczepański, 1991)*. In the case of Tychy it concerned the church and the workers' hotel. It was reflecting the situation that in the cities of socialist Poland, it was possible to observe attempts to eliminate the sacred space which frequently caused social conflicts. Followed with spontaneous persistence (in spite of the official spatial plans) or the appropriation of space and the creation of new spaces of worship in places were not anticipated in the plans.

Since 1970 Tychy has been among the towns dominating in Katowice conurbation's population with the percentage share of 3.8. According to the results of the study by Runge *(2008, p. 67-68.)* the share of Tychy's population grew constantly throughout the period of socialism (as well in the phase of transformation), reaching the highest level of the share in population structure of the conurbation by 5.6%, in the year 2005.

Studies conducted in the late 1980s *(Szczepanski, 1991)* revealed the social composition of the new socialist city. Most of the residents came from the Upper Silesian Industrial District, but a large part of them were migrants from other, mainly agricultural regions of Poland, but also re-emigrants from Belgium, France and Germany. A specific group constituted families repatriated from the Soviet Union (in 1958), who were settled in housing estate C (which was under construction that time and these families account for around 50% of the inhabitants of this estate), and the workers' hotels, which as determined by M. Szczepanski (1991) were the social ghettos (in the early 1990s around 7000 employees lived in dormitories and boarding houses).

An important social feature that shaped the city was the lack of the citizens' social integration. In spite of the new and relatively modern technologies, though, due to the unfavourable structure of the functional pattern of urban space social integration has been marginal. This is particularly true in the case of housing estate (sets of blocks of flats: C, D, E, O, N and M, F) areas[2]. The spatial pattern of the core city formed according to the ideological doctrine was based on the radical separation of the place of work from the place of living (as required by the Charter of Athens). The negative impact of such spatial pattern forced inhabitants to long commuting to work. In addition, the lack of the shaped symbolic space, services, cultural and recreational facilities had limited the development of the local community. As a result the inhabitants' identity with their place of living was very poor. Only two residents of 100 respondents identified Tychy as a "homeland", and 25 would immediately have moved beyond Silesia if they had had the opportunity *(Szczepanski, 1991, p. 60.)*. In the 1980s Tychy was generally treated as a bedroom for Katowice and as a temporary place to stay.

In case of housing estates (blocks of flats) located on the outskirts of the city, the situation was more strongly differentiated. The most extreme case, shown by M.S. Szczepanski (1991) was the complex of housing blocks R (Regina) inhabited by 5,000 people, which was equipped only with one small grocery store, a newsstand and one nursery organised in physically connected apartments. Better conditions for social integration were physically and organisationally formed in the complex of housing blocks named K, which was equipped with several every day services.

In 1973, the "Polski Fiat" factory[3], which in 2009 became the largest factory of Fiat in Europe, was located in Tychy (and Bielsko Biała). Such a factory generated a large demand for labour, from the very beginnings it diversified and reduced commuting to the central part of Silesia to some extent, and pushed further housing development in the southern direction.

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[2] The first housing estate of the „New Town Tychy" was named „A" (Anna) and the next estates, consisting a complex of block of flats as well, constructed in the following years were named using the alphabet letters B, C, D, E etc.

[3] The production of „Polski Fiat 126p" lasted till 2000, than the models Uno, Siena and Palio Weekend, Panda, Seicento, Fiat 500, as well Ford Ka II and Lancia Ypsilon II were made.

The sociological assessment of the new city of Tychy as a "socialist city" expresses disappointments. First of all it has not created conditions for the emergence of a strong community that would identify itself with the place of residence. The architectural structure had a uniformed, totalitarian and egalitarian character, which only provided institutional and efficient management control tools over the residents. The seeds of local communities emerged only in those parts of the city where the imposed norms, ideologies, doctrines and plans were not implemented *(Szczepanski, 1991, p. 64.)*. It is characteristic that in spite of their relatively hard living condition the inhabitants of Tychy were aware that living conditions in other Silesian cities were much harder.

## *The post-1989 challenges*

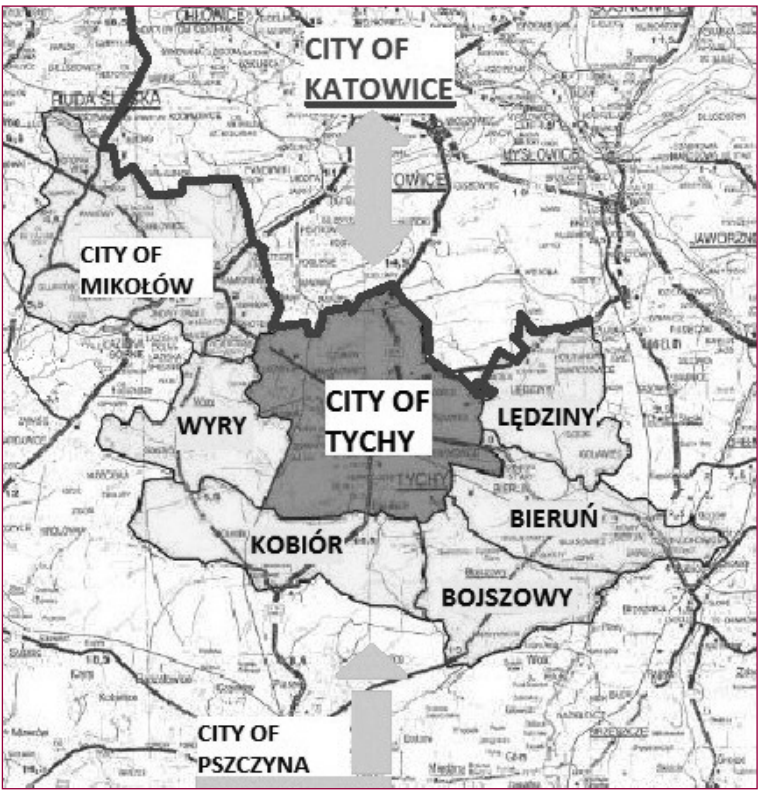
The political change of 1989 generated the immediate transformation of the socialist city of Tychy. One of the first elements of abandoning the socialist city features was the rebirth of democratic local self-government, which made the – that time extremely rare – decision to reduce the administrative area of the city. As a result in 1991, 5 former neighbourhoods: Bieruń, Bojszowy, Kobiór, Lędziny and Wyry again became administratively separate communities (gminas) from proper Tychy. *(Map 16)*

Before the division the territory of Tychy was approximately 271 $km^2$, and the population was about 191 000. Although the territory of Tychy was decreased by 65% to the area of 87.72 $km^2$, after the dissociation the population of Tychy decreased only by 30% to approximately 133 000 inhabitants. Due to that administrative changes outside the city most of the troublesome coal mine industry was left aside and the density of population almost doubled, hence Tychy entered the phase of intense socio-economic transformation in a much more compact urban form.

Many street names were changed from communist heroes to the historical patrons of democracy in Poland. The same evolution as the changes of street names concerns the landscape and monuments. In this "socialist city" the establishment of numerous elements of sacred spaces (like churches) has particular significance.

The most dramatic challenge connected with post-1989 transformation, which was unknown in the previous political system, concerns unemployment. This phenomenon associated with the

Map 16: Location of Tychy with its neighbouring communities (in dark grey) in relation to the borders of Katowice – the regional centre of Silesia.




*Source: The authors' own edition*

transformation was much more serious on the whole country scale than on the local scale – in the town of Tychy. In the last decade on the national scale unemployment declined from 17.6% in 2005 to 9.8% in 2015, on the regional scale (of Silesia) for the same period the decline was from 15.4% to 8.2%. In the case of Tychy the progress was much larger, unemployment dropped from 12% in 2005 to only 3.9% in 2015. In spite of that increased unemployment has remained the most important factor of generating poverty and different social problems.

Despite the systematic decline (in the last decade) the number of people in need of social assistance involves 1,098 families. In general, the main cause why people seek assistance (72.22%) was unemployment. In addition, in 2014 pending the feeding program benefited 3,664 people and as part of the so-called "tasks own

communes" i.e. financed from local authority budget, including assistance in the form of targeted benefits supported 2,293 families, representing 3.7% of the population. The structure of the receivers of social assistance concerns first of all 57,46% single-person households, 19.35% of single-parents families, 9.72% families with many children, and only 13.47% is full families *(Pomoc–Społeczna, 2014)*

One of the serious challenges is the demographic crisis characterised by the gradual decrease of the population from 133 760 in 1995, to 128 621 in 2014. In terms of economic categories, the share of the post-working groups jumped from 9.9% in 1995 to 19.1% in 2014. In case of the pre-working age citizens, we observe a radical drop from 29.2% in 1995 to 16.6% in 2014. Only in the case of working age population was an increase noticed between 1995 and 2010 and since then their number has gradually been decreasing *(Table 18)*.

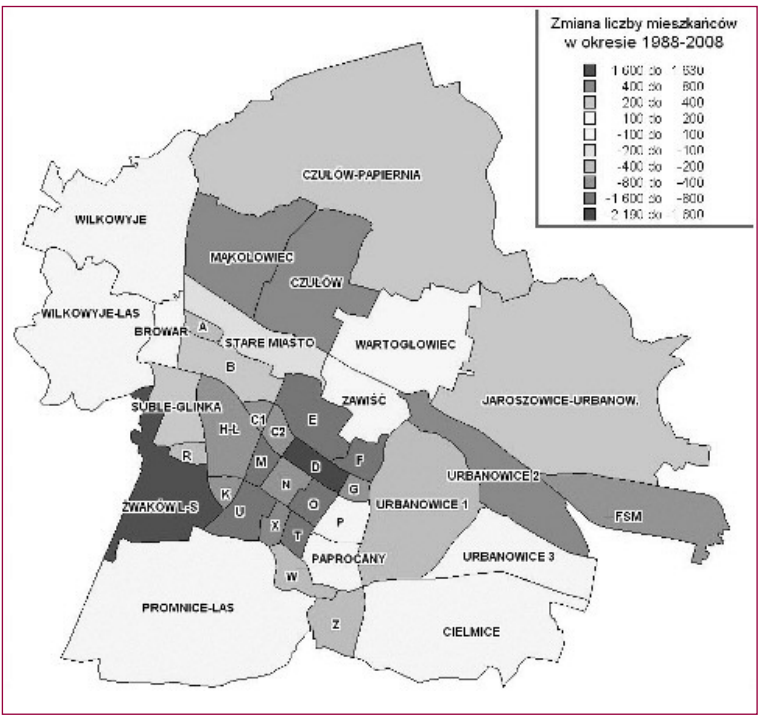
The forecast for 2035, however, looks more challenging. A decrease will occur in all economic categories: for the pre-working category (0-17 years of age) will drop by 31.7%, for the working age (of 18-60/65 years) will drop 28.5%. While the share of retirement age people will increase by 27.1%. So the aging of Tychy's society is one of the future challenges of the local self-government, although,

Table 18: Population in Tychy by economic categories (1995-2014) (people; %)

| Years | Population | | | | w % | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total | in pre-working age | in working age | in post-working age | in pre-working age | in working age | in post-working age |
| 2014 | 128 621 | 21 408 | 82 654 | 24 529 | 16,6 | 64,3 | 19,1 |
| 2012 | 129 112 | 21 187 | 85 851 | 22 074 | 16,4 | 66,5 | 17,1 |
| 2010 | 129 386 | 21 122 | 88 191 | 20 073 | 16,3 | 68,2 | 15,5 |
| 2005 | 131 153 | 23 107 | 90 721 | 17 325 | 17,6 | 69,2 | 13,2 |
| 2000 | 133 463 | 29 545 | 88 730 | 15 188 | 22,1 | 66,5 | 11,4 |
| 1995 | 133 760 | 39 117 | 81 443 | 13 200 | 29,2 | 60,9 | 9,9 |

*Source: Statistical Office, Bank Danych Lokalnych – www.stat.gov.pl*

Map 17: Change in the number of Tychy inhabitants (1988-2008)




*(Source: Studium uwarunkowa i kierunków zagospodarowania przestrzennego miasta Tychy. pp.47, http://bip.umtychy.pl/index.php?action=PobierzPlik&id=122571)*

the disadvantageous structural change of Tychy's demography has not been considered yet as a key development factor by the authorities (in January 2016 only half of the 35 municipal decision makers interviewed identified the 'rapid aging of the population' as one of the 'only three' crucial development factors).

The characteristic transformation represents the new way of strategic planning, visible in the document: "Urban Strategy of Tychy till 2020+". In addition to the involvement of experts, it takes the social participation into account more and more seriously. A wide range of local actors are invited to participate in identifying and solving problems, in the formulation and implementation of the planning and building strategy. For example, during the consultations in the framework of workshops the proposed solutions were approved according to the principle of consensus.

The survey on 1000 Tychy citizens prepared in 2009 by P. Rojek and G. Gawron (2011) on the perception of the city demonstrat-

ed the post-socialist development. According to this research 60% of the respondents declared strong, plus another 35% average identity with Tychy. In addition, 65% would not move permanently to another city with their family even if they had such an opportunity. Respondents assessing particular elements of the living conditions put shopping opportunities, access to consumer services and public transport among the best features of the city. Relatively good ratings were given to educational opportunities, the business environment and availability of public administration. The lowest assessment concerned the state of communal economy, housing and environmental protection.

These studies based on the semantic differential technique (analysis of several pairs of opposite adjectives, positive and negative) showed an extremely positive image of their city. The highest values obtained such adjectives defining the city as: "mine", "green", "nice", "comfortable", "well connected city". The only negative adjective used, was "dispersed city" *(Rojek–Adamek–Gawron, 2011)*.

### *Economic development on regional and city scale*

Tychy is a city located in the Katowicki sub-region which, according to the Institute for Market Economics *(Nowicki, 2014),* was at the top in investment attractiveness for industrial activities in 2013-2014 among Polish sub-regions, however, in terms of attractiveness for service activities it came third place. Such attractiveness is based on the high density of road infrastructure, access to the international airport, proximity to the A4 motorway, above-average availability of the western border, well-developed transport and logistics sector, large resources of high qualified employees, high number of vocational graduates, available Special Economic Zone, very large number of companies with foreign capital, very high performance and relatively low share of protected areas. On the scale of the whole region (Silesian Voivodeship) it is one of the strongest (after Warsaw) in Poland. Silesian Voivodship is generating 12.4% of Poland's GDP. In general, "The Silesian Voivodeship is rich in natural resources such as hard coal, deposits of zinc, lead, methane, natural gas, marlstone, chalkstone, and natural break-stone, as well as medicinal, thermal and mineral waters. The existing raw material base led to the creation of

Poland's one of largest industrial regions. (...) Hard coal mining and iron and steel industry were undergoing deep restructuring. Reduced employment rate and improved efficiency are some of the effects brought by the transformations implemented in mining. Metallurgy, on the other hand, has been affected by essential changes in forms of ownership and management structure. The result is nearly complete privatisation of the industry. Now in the process of restructuring, traditional Silesian industrial branches created the basis on which branches connected with their operation were developed, that is, first of all engineering industry, equipped with appropriate machines and experienced staff. After the difficult transformations introduced in the first years of the nineties, the industry entered numerous foreign markets and now is a crucial element of the industrial landscape of the Voivodeship. (...) Restructuring in the recent years has caused systematic changes in the economic structure of the Voivodeship. The whole industry reports a decreased share of mining and metallurgy, which until recently were predominant in the economy of the Voivodeship, and an increased share of the electro-engineering industry, the information technology industry, power industry and, reporting the most rapid growth, the automotive industry (the region is Poland's largest car producer) and food industry" *(Nowicki, 2014)*.

### *Evolution of the social and occupational structure*

According to the survey from 2013, nearly 70% of the inhabitants declare a strong sense of connection with the city, and only every fiftieth person claims that they do not feel bound with Tychy. Only 14% of respondents, mostly young people, would take into account the possibility to leave Tychy permanently, for professional, family or household reasons. At the same time 80% of residents assessed living conditions positively, while only 1.1% of respondents had the opposite opinion. The vast majority of residents attributed high marks almost to all analysed indicators of the quality of life which are associated with consumption and access to services. The lowest rates, however, were recorded in the assessment of job opportunities and development entrepreneurship *(Strategia Rozwoju Miasta, Tychy 2020+)*. Employment in the industrial sector still prevails. *(Table 19)*

Table 19: Structure of employment in Tychy (according to the Polish Classification of Activities (PKD 2007)

| Years | Number of employed persons | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Agriculture, forestry and fishing | Industry and construction | Sections G H H I J | Sections K L | Other services |
| 2005 | 478 | 18 706 | 7 311 | 1472 | 10 099 |
| 2006 | 430 | 21 147 | 7 564 | 1456 | 9 535 |
| 2007 | 428 | 24 712 | 7 473 | 1513 | 10 074 |
| 2008 | 423 | 26 982 | 8 342 | 1980 | 10 395 |
| 2009 | 412 | 26 285 | 8 608 | 1950 | 12 052 |
| 2010 | 257 | 26 183 | 8 846 | 2078 | 12 240 |
| 2011 | 534 | 25 034 | 8 357 | 2603 | 10 503 |
| 2012 | 253 | 25 311 | 8 295 | 3050 | 9 695 |
| 2013 | 251 | 22 996 | 8 128 | 3085 | 10 678 |

*Source: Central Statistical Office, Bank Danych Lokalnych – www.stat.gov.pl*
*Sections G, H, I, J – "Wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles", "Transportation and storage", "Accommodation and food service activities", "Information and Communications"*
*Sections K, L – "Financial and insurance activities", "Real estate activities"*

## The perception of the post-1989 problems and crises in the light of interviews

The interviews revealed the majorities of real social and economic issues, problems and challenges. The most striking and characteristic element of the transformation concerns the concept of democracy itself. One of the respondents while stating that the immediate first issue concerns the management problem, the local community of the city has been "receiving independence". Such a strong statement was in different, more moderate ways confirmed by all respondents. The administrative changes connected with the introduction of new local self-government in case of Tychy, have reduced the former territory by dividing it into 3 administrative units, with one proper Tychy urban area making the town more compact and easier to manage. Particularly important was the for-

mation of separate communities which includes the territory of the coal mines in the outskirts. As a result in all the statistics the population of the proper Tychy city area has dropped to around 130 000 instead of 190 000 inhabitants under previous administrative divisions. The reduction of Tychy's territory also brought positive changes, at present Tychy is no longer an amorphous town, it is much easier to form a close relation between inhabitants and the town they live in. Current administrative structure on the sub-regional scale also proved to be very good. The sub-region of Tychy (Subregion Tyski) consists of 12 communities. Each of them has their own development plans in which the coordination of the responsibilities of self-government is distributed – they are delegated to the particular communities to serve the whole sub-region. This is a unique situation and a rare example of good cooperation between local self-government authorities on the country scale. It concerns the share of the budget as well. Such cooperation is voluntarily accepted by all participating communities and supported by the regional self-government (Silesian Voivodship).

### *Identification of the socio-economic problems of the transformation*

The positive noticeable changes include the improvement in the service sector, particularly the much easier access to daily products. By general opinion such a deveopment has substantial significance in the ameliorating living conditions in the city; however, the full saturation of the market has not been reached yet.

Unemployment as one of the typical problems of the whole country appeared in more moderate ways in Tychy. While mentioning unemployment as a problem respondents immediately mentioned the development of the free economic zone, which has contributed to the reduction of the initial appearance of unemployment. The special economic zone, organised and located in Tychy was the main factor concerning the change of the city's life. Such a localisation decision has commonly been assessed as an adequate choice that protected the majority of the inhabitants from the negative effects of the economic transformation. Nevertheless, it is necessary to mention that some segregated areas do exist with unemployment problems. One example is the district of Tychy named: "Czułów – Osada", inhabited by app. 350 people, where due to its privatisation the large local paper factory stopped to be

the main employer of this neighbourhood. Consequently the structural and long term unemployment in case of the inhabitants of that settlement since the mid-90s led to a deep urban decay of that part of Tychy. Unemployment as a basic phenomenon, just after 1990, has also been reduced thanks to the spontaneous formation of individual entrepreneurships. In addition, like in other urban areas in Poland, the phenomenon of "spontaneous market" appeared. The most popular form was just selling different goods: from hands, pavements, tourist stalls, or primitive temporary kiosks. Transformation of such spontaneous economic activities into more civilised market forms has been gradually organised by the local authority. The privatisation of the ground floor levels of blocks of flats and converting them into commercial units (usually shops) became frequent and visible trends till now. This phenomenon was frequently named as "ground floor capitalism".

In all the interviews the general attitude in connection with the post-1989 system changes is positive. Tychy certainly belongs to the category of cities which are the winners of transformation. For the respondents Tychy is "a good place for living, better than other parts of Silesia". Constant comparisons are characteristic to the regional context of Upper Silesia, the region dominated by severe environmental problems, old technical infrastructure and the congestion of old industrial production and which region is currently the largest producer of coal in Europe. Tychy is among those cities which have the ability to adopt themselves to the demands of market economy and could develop service functions to the surrounding region, which is rarely the case in Silesia.

In case of Tychy one of the "good practice" examples is the self-government initiative (grassroots initiative) to revitalize and create the regional railway as tools to serve surrounding areas. It is worth to emphasise that this innovative initiative was launched in spite of the unfavourable legislation conditions. This only involves the partnership between Tychy's self-government and the railway company. Such local policy maintains the regional position of Tychy as urban centre on regional scale. Currently Tychy serves three surrounding counties like: Pszczyński, Mikołowski and Bieruńsko-Lędziński, having all together around 400 000 inhabitants.

### *The characteristics of the socio-spatial polarisation and inequalities*

The assessment of the current socio-spatial differentiation is usually very general. In most cases it is assessed as "equal" or "balanced", however, sometimes some problematic areas of lower status or problem areas are named. As an example, respondent referred to the "Czułów – Osiedle (i.e. estate)" in the vicinity of the old paper factory. This former paper factory "patronage" estate currently consists of 8 blocks of flats and is inhabited by around 350 people and is characterised by the quick rotation of inhabitants, concentration of poverty and social exclusion. Currently this estate is owned by the city, and serves as a municipal social housing facility. Interestingly this estate is close to the very wealthy neighbourhood.

At the beginning – the first decades of the city, residents constituted a conglomerate of people of different origins and cultural background, which generated the conflict associated with their altering social norms and adaptation to urban lifestyle. It was a substantial problem particularly for the migrants from rural areas. In spite of this diversity of origin and social affiliation the conflicts between those social groups gradually ceased to be relevant due to the progressive integration.

Some respondents just deny socio-spatial inequalities: "In Tychy there is no clear division between good and bad neighbourhoods'", however, they indicate some exceptional cases of poverty in Tychy and particularly in other cities of Silesia, or say "There are no larger diversities in Tychy, you cannot see "glaring poverty". This phenomenon is visible more expressively in Katowice. Poverty in Tychy is represented by dispersed single buildings that do not dominate their neighbourhood. Such a district appears in Gliwice, but not in Tychy". Sometimes respondents stress that: "people of different social status use well designed public space together". The interviewed described Tychy as a town composed of settlements (estates) of mixed socio-economic structure, where wealthy and poor live 'together', giving several examples, such as Czułów, Wilkowyje, Paprocany, Stare Tychy or estates B, C, P or O.

In spite of the prevailing assessment that Tychy currently represents a relatively equal (or balanced) social structure, respondents identified the different positions of miner-, worker-families and intelligentsia families, and also admitted that visually noticeable economic disparities are present in Tychy.

Attitude towards the existing social and spatial diversity remains surprising. A rather frequent reaction to the question about the existence of social differentiation or inequalities is denial, or while confirming such facts, the respondents attempted to reduce their significance. First of all the majority of respondents deny the existence of inequality in the public space, in the official public life of the town, but allocate such problems to the practices of everyday life. Some respondents mentioned extra-large luxuriously equipped cars in use and the shopping behaviour of inhabitants as most visible signs of current differentiation.

Frequently, the ownership, quality and location of housing were regarded as signs of social differentiation. In general, the development of private housing is blamed for the increase of social differentiation, particularly the formation of 'gated communities" promoted by housing developers and suburban development in the form of urban sprawl. The participation in mass events organised in the public spaces of the city where usually the dominative majority of the participants is composed of poor inhabitants with less income was also given as a significant symptom of social differentiation. At the same time, respondents pointed out the relationship of the quality of the public space in the city with the presence of people from different social groups in it: good design (of medium standard, acceptable by the middle and upper class) has an inclusive potential. Two public spaces – Baczyński sq. (in the city centre) and Lake Paprocany esplanade[4] (at the outskirts) were mentioned as empirical evidences for that in Tychy by the interviewees, these places are frequently used by socially diverged inhabitants in great numbers.

The comments concerning the demographic structure, particularly an increase in the share of elderly people in the city's population are most popular signs of social differentiation. Surprisingly, unemployment is very rarely mentioned in case of Tychy, just like the level of education and generally access to education.

[4] The urban design of the Paprocany's Lake Esplanade by RS+Robert Skitek Office, got the Grand Prix price as the Best Public Space of the Twenty-fifth Years of Democracy in Poland awarded by the Society of Polish Urban Planners, as well the best Public Space in Silesia Region in 2015 awarded by the Self-Government of the Silesian Region.

While a large proportion of respondents denied social differentiation in a certain way, they easily and more precisely identified the spatial allocation of rich and poor areas. Particularly two areas are more frequently mentioned; part of Czułów (Osada) representing the poverty stricken area and Paprocany as a rich and the best area.

The wealthiest area in the socio-spatial structure of Tychy consists of (in general not so sharply) separated areas. According to the respondents the wealthiest population live in the historically oldest part of the city (i.e. Stare Tychy), on Paprocany estate (an area of prosperity, and "good address" dominated by individual houses); on Z1 estate (constructed from the beginning as a comprehensive urbanistic concept); in Mąkołowiec area (characterised as wealthy estate but unplanned with a chaotic spatial pattern) and in smaller enclaves in the areas of Czułów, Wygorzele, Suble, Jaroszowiec.

The poorest inhabitants are concentrated in dispersed enclaves and in general in the high multi-storey panel buildings or communal housing stocks. The oldest section of the new city estates A, B, C and D currently concentrate more pensioners (mostly former miners) and elderly people, so some poverty is visible in those areas. The same is true for the high-rise buildings in the southern part of Tychy's downtown (estates named H and M). Some smaller enclaves of poverty were identified by respondents in the housing estates near the streets of Katowicka (Czułów – Osada), Leśna, Browarowa, Świerkowa (communal housing). It concerns as well settlement H (inhabited by former employees of the FIAT factory), and settlement C (which concentrates the social group dependant on social assistance). The rest of the city – the large majority of the city territory – is inhabited by average and generally well-to-do population. In terms of socio-spatial differentiation respondents also compared relatively low differentiation in Tychy in relation to a much larger differentiation in other Silesian cities.

### *The impact of European integration and globalisation processes on the economic prosperity of the city*

The inflow of foreign capital to Tychy was gradual. It was not a linear process but there were some intensive periods of changes in investments. The previous existence of the Fiat factory and its con-

tinuation in the car production has been positively perceived all the time as a chance, even under communism, to change the original mining and dormitory character of the city. At the beginning the processes of the industrial reconstruction prevailed. The turning point after the transformation of 1989 was the formation of the Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Tychy that attracted the majority of the inflow of new foreign investments. (foreign capital invested in Tychy came from Italy, USA, Japan, Republic of South Africa, Great Britain, France, Portugal)

The evaluation of the impact of international and generally foreign companies on the economic development and prosperity in the city was much differentiated. In case of salaries a part of the respondents claim that they are higher in case of companies with foreign owners, others say that they are lower than in companies owned by Poles. In general, the public opinion is that salaries are higher in foreign companies. In reality, since one of the objectives of the international companies is the search for lower paid labour, in reality they pay lower wages to their employees in comparison to Polish companies, when the salaries of workers, technicians, administrative staff and middle-range managers are concerned. Generally, respondents confirm the opinion that international companies search mostly for low-paid labour with just basic vocational training, and accessibility to labour resources of this kind was the most important element of the localisation decision for them in this particular country, region and the city. The majority of the respondents recognised the impact of SEZ on the exceptional upgrading of the city's competitiveness and the reduction of the investors' risk, which was already mentioned in the study, as a key factor of the (relative) good condition of the present labour market. There is important differentiation concerning the quality of the labour force, education and skills. The majority of the interviewees claim that they are better in international corporations. Respondents often deny the importance of the differentiation of salaries according to the division between foreign and Polish companies, or state that they have no adequate knowledge and information. International investors demand workers mostly for simple manual jobs, which was fulfilled by the commuting labour from neighbouring communities. Tychy inhabitants, however, representing higher skills and better labour qualifications than the majority of the population in the neighbouring communities tend-

ed to look for jobs rather in Katowice. Nevertheless, the existence of international companies has a considerable impact on the diversification of job opportunities.

In general, the future and the prosperity of the city depend, to a high extent, on global market and development tendencies generated outside the city and the sub-region. It was mentioned that the urban development of Tychy has created good conditions for international companies to start their activity. As an example one of the respondent mentioned the location of the printing company delivering the nationwide daily issue of "Gazeta Wyborcza" – a popular Polish newspaper and the call centres for the whole world.

## Conclusions

In the post-1989 democratic transformation the rebirth of the local self-governments and their reaching maturity during the last 25 years have the basic importance. The last decades of Tychy's positive development indicates, however, thanks to the new forms of governance, a new relationship between civil society (which is still not fully formed in the case of Tychy) and the formal structure of local government. Gradual implementation of the subsidiarity ideas has created a favourable atmosphere among the inhabitants, which is essential for a post-socialist city like Tychy in order to be able to respond to future challenges. The city is on the good way to build up its new image and its new economic base. In the case of Tychy regarding the formation processes we can see the conversion from a coherent plan pattern domination to a more "organic" development, characterised by the domination of spontaneous adaptation to the evolving demands of inhabitants and adopting external impacts of the political, economic and social situation.

On the basis of the conducted empirical research it can be noted that Tychy is an example of great changes occurring both through the far-reaching strategic decisions of the municipal government and owing to the specific features of the socio-spatial structure of this city at the beginning of the transformation process, which also consisted of a properly (consequently) planned urban pattern.

From the international comparative research of the post-socialist cities *(Węcławowicz, 2013)* we can draw the conclusions, which could be applicable in the case of Tychy as well, that various

strategic perspectives are necessary at appropriate spatial levels, and the formation of coalition between citizens, local and external investors and local authorities is needed in order to shape the cities. The last decade of institutional activities concerns mainly the observation, recording, acceptance or adaptation of the chances for development resulting from the domination of the 'invisible hands of the market'.

The city development spatial plan (Studium 2013) primarily suggests focusing strongly on actions to increase the position of Tychy in the hierarchy of regional economic centres, which is associated with the expected abolition of tax preference for investors active in SEZ (hence the re-location of present industry is predicted, and expected). The development priorities of the city also include slowing down the outflow of people, especially the working-age population and the creation of conditions conducive to the socio-economic factors of improving fertility rates and attracting new residents.

Conservation and exhibition of objects, public goods of modern culture and urbanity highly relevant to the identity of the city (created mainly as the result of the planned urbanisation after 1950) slowly become highly valued by Tychy's society (monuments, buildings and areas of contemporary urban compositions, like the 'Green Axis' of specific rank in the urban composition).

The vision of the future is, basically, the 'clever continuation' of the main directives of the socio-spatial composition of the 'historical new city', including the strict delimitation of dominant functional zones of residential, commercial or industrial assignment, that's very much typical for the invincible modernistic approach to urban planning.

# Nová Dubnica and its Region: The Slovak Case Study

Peter Gajdoš – Katarína Moravanská

## Introduction

Nová Dubnica is a representative example of the new industrial towns which were put forward during the socialist period as models, the flagships of the state's self-declared successful social policy *(Abaffyová, 2014)*. As a result, these towns were often given preference when creating favourable conditions for growth/living, over other types of towns. For architects and town planners, the construction of new towns offered opportunities for designing the ideal towns of the future. This is also the case for the new "ideal socialist town" of Nová Dubnica built in the 1950s.

The frequent public presentation of these towns made them well-known. With their dynamic growth and good living conditions, these new towns attracted young people in particular, for whom growing industrialism and associated modernisation created new opportunities for personal, family and social development.

The changes brought about by the total transformation of society after 1989 were often complicated for these types of towns and required both fundamental changes in their economic base and in the town's management and development strategies, as well as placing significant demands on their population when adapting to changing circumstances in the fields of work, housing and lifestyle.

In this case study, we want to use the example of the town of Nová Dubnica and its region to present specific characteristics of

The study has been realised within the confines of the research entitled "Social Polarisation in the Hungarian and Eastern-Central European 'New Town' Regions: Impacts of Transition and Globalisation" (K 106169), funded by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office.

certain areas of industrial towns during socialism, as well as the changes which the society-transforming processes starting in 1989 and the beginning of globalisation at the end of the 1990s brought to this type of settlement.

The case study focuses its attention on the socio-economic and socio-spatial processes which lay behind these changes, their impact on the town's development opportunities and on the population's social structure and living conditions. We attempt to point out strategies which this small industrial town is applying during this current stage of globalisation, both in terms of economics and in solving existing social, socio-economic and socio-spatial problems within the town community.[1]

## The geographical location and history of Nová Dubnica and its region

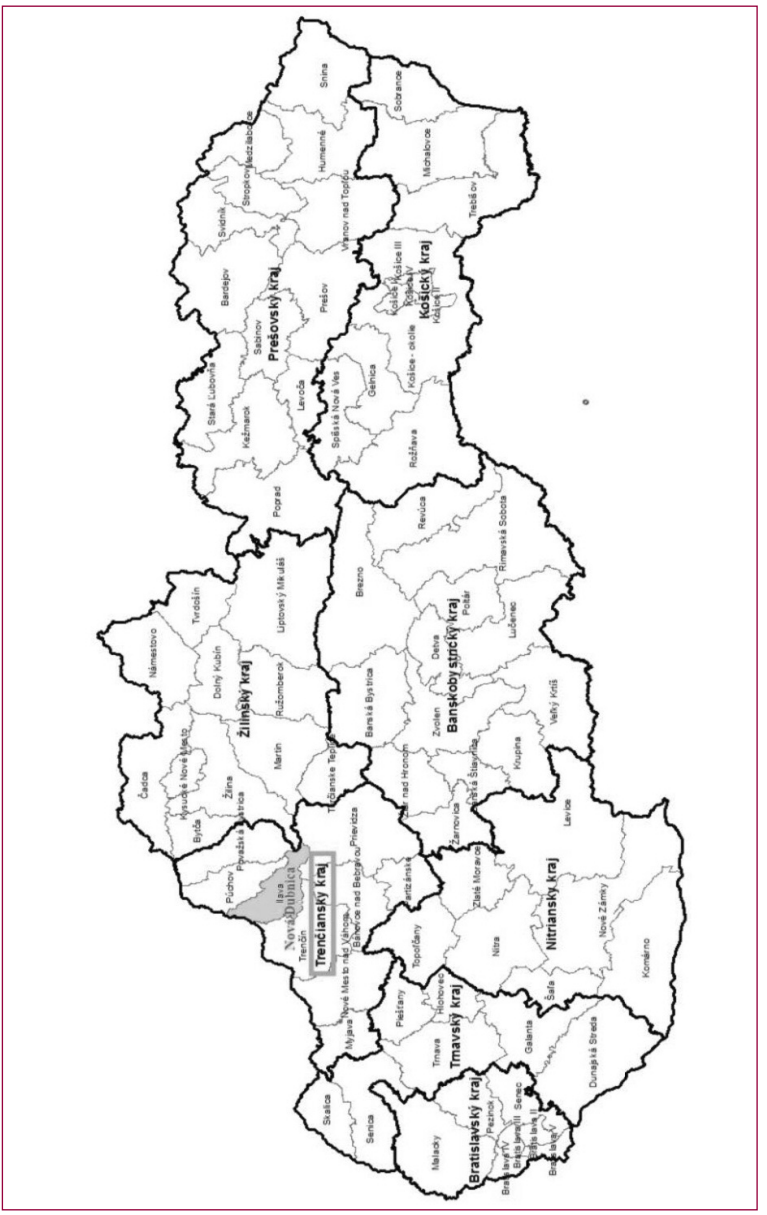
### *Geographical situation of Nová Dubnica and its position within the region's urban structure*

The town of Nová Dubnica lies in Western Slovakia, in the central Považie region, in the southern part of the Ilava basin through which flows Slovakia's longest and biggest river, the Váh.It is one of Slovakia's most industrially developed regions, as well as one of the most developed overall in terms of economy and society.

Within Slovakia's territorial and administrative organisation, Nová Dubnica is part of the Trenčín region (NUTS III) and within the region, it belongs to the Ilava district (NUTS IV). It is also part of the nodal (municipal) region of Trenčín, which is founded on

[1] We are aware that a town's image is always socially constructed, made up of various factors which perceive the current situation and developmental changes in markedly differing ways. Age, a person's socio-economic status, the level of identification with the town etc. all have an impact. For this reason, we used various sources of data and methodological approaches in our analyses with the intention of attempting to identify a realistic image of the status and nature of developmental changes in Nová Dubnica as reflected by different types of inhabitants of the town. Since it is a case study, we used a combination of different data collection techniques to prepare it: an analysis of documents (historical sources), supplemented by interviews with experts from the town and region, as well as a secondary analysis of the results of a sociological survey of the town's population, and naturally, above all, an analysis of statistical data.

Map 18: Spatial localisation of Trenčín region, Ilava district and town Nová Dubnica




*Source: The authors' own edition*

the mutual relations and connections between the central city of Trenčín and its surrounding settlements, regardless of their administrative divisions.

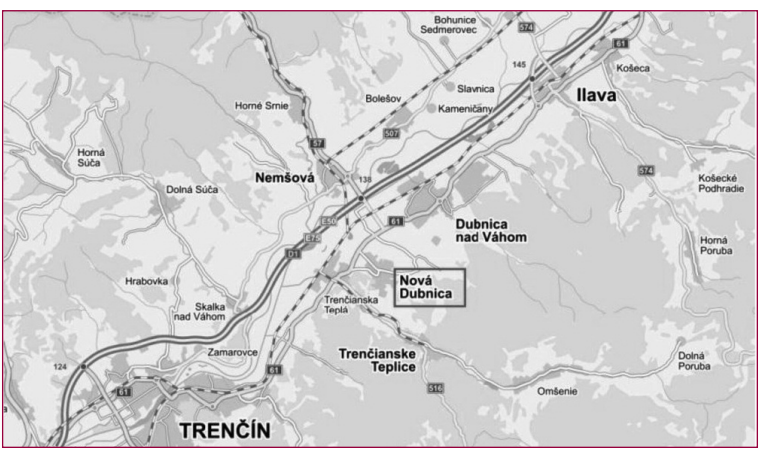
Nová Dubnica has a good geographical situation and convenient location near main transport routes, which makes it easy to access. Two important international road and rail links pass near the town. The public airport in Trenčín with civil and military operations and a further small airfield in Dubnica-Slavnica are located near the town. Neither airport, however, has regular flights. The proximity to the Czech Republic, adjacent to the Trenčín region, is of strategic importance.

An important factor in the attraction of the built-up area of Nová Dubnica is the fact that the town has no through transit traffic. There is no municipal public transport in the town, which is unnecessary due to its size. However, there is a sufficiently dense network of inter-town bus links in the region, ensuring the population's mobility between surrounding built-up areas and regions.

Another important factor in Nová Dubnica's accessibility is the town's specific position within the built-up region. Trenčín, the regional capital, lies just 8 km to the south-west and the well-known spa town of Trenčianske Teplice is 7 km to the south-east; the towns of Dubnica nad Váhom and Ilava, whose district Nová Dubnica is part of, lie to the north-east. Nová Dubnica is a convenient starting-point for hiking, cycling and leisure activities.

Slovakia's new territorial organisation introduced in 1996 brought significant change to Slovakia's urban structure. For the

Map 19: Geographical situation of Nová Dubnica




*Source: Google Maps*

town of Nová Dubnica, this changed its position from being on the edge to gaining an almost central position within the newly-formed region and district. Further significant changes were the public administration reform (1991) combined with a shift of competencies from state administration to municipal self-government, and financial decentralisation (2004), which created more favourable conditions for the self-government of Nová Dubnica from the point of view of the growth of the town and for improving living conditions for its population.

## *Specific features of the foundation of Nová Dubnica and the historical contexts behind its growth*

The foundation of Nová Dubnica is closely linked with the construction and growth of the mechanical engineering works in Dubnica nad Váhom (Dubnica). The construction of the latter began in the middle of the 1930s as part of the Škoda works in Plzeň. World War II had a great impact on their development, so dynamic growth was not in evidence until the post-war period. The Považie region to which Nová Dubnica belongs was already an area with significant growth during the pre-industrial period, and particularly during the industrial period of the 1950s. Alongside Trenčín, Dubnica become a centre for employment in this region with its heavy engineering and general engineering works, employing at one time over 15,000 workers from within a perimeter of up to 50 km. *(Kiacová, 2007)*

The growth in the volume of production was linked to increasing numbers of workers. As a result of the lack of accommodation facilities, workers needed to commute daily to Dubnica. The intensive growth in local bus services was able to meet the need for transporting employees to work. Providing a transport system for workers also, however, contributed to the creation of many new jobs, enabling the population to be mobile in a completely new way, thus impacting the development of the urban area and an explosion in the construction of flats, together with a change in the structure of employment. Dubnica gradually became the biggest employer in the Považie region. *(Kiacová, 2007)*

This fact, conditioned by targeted social benefits and a higher than average wage, brought hundreds of people each year to this location from throughout Slovakia. This was one of the reasons

why new blocks of flats had to be built rapidly, as well as the corresponding facilities and infrastructure. Since the factory in Dubnica had no free accommodation facilities, the solution to this situation was to be the construction of a new housing estate with rental flats for employees near the town of Dubnica, which was supposed to be built on a greenfield site. The project for building a completely new residential complex became a challenge for architects to design a model socialist town which would represent not only the ideology and priorities of a socialist facility, but would also represent the architecture of socialist realism and its idea of a town.

Preparatory works for this urban complex began in 1951, and the design project for the town was carried out by the studio of the architect Jiří Kroha. The centre was a large square made up of residential blocks with arcades housing shops and services. The rest of the town was designed as a set of residential blocks with small squares and parks. As well as a civilised number of facilities for its time, the new town was also supposed to have a properly developed network of primary and secondary schools, and also nursery schools and crèches, which were not very common at the time. A unique urban structure was thus created, giving the town an original image even today.

The construction of Nová Dubnica began in September 1952, around 3.5 km to the south of Dubnica; the total cost of the construction of the housing estate was supposed to be 548 million CSK. At the time of its foundation, Nová Dubnica was the largest investment in housing in Slovakia. Nová Dubnica gained its first inhabitants in the winter of 1953. In 1954, the Medical Centre was opened, and a regular bus route between towns was opened. In 1955, public lighting was installed in Nová Dubnica and the first post and telegraph office was established. 1956 saw the opening of the first nursery school, the first primary school and the "Mier" cinema, which was also used for cultural and social events. Later, it was equipped with a restaurant and canteen. *(Kiacová, 2007)*

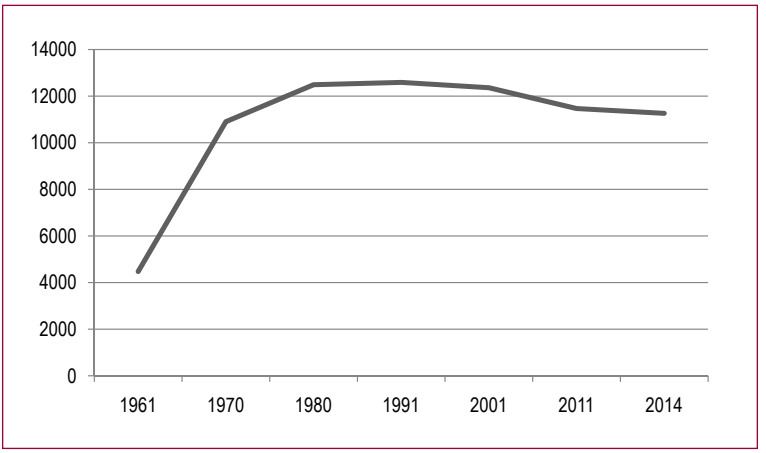
The housing estate, which until then had belonged to the self-governing entity of Dubnica, became a municipality on June 1st 1957, when it was given the name of Nová Dubnica. On June 8th 1960, Nová Dubnica was given the status of a town, giving further impulse to its development. Shops, cultural and sports facilities were built. In 1961, the construction of a 23-class primary school

began; in 1969, another primary school was built, the most modern one in the region. In the middle of the 1960s, a sports stadium, ice rink, outdoor swimming-pool and seven co-operative blocks of flats were built in the town. At this point, the town already had 3 primary schools, 3 nursery schools, 2 crèches and a shopping centre. In 1969, the first panoramic cinema in Slovakia was opened with 550 seats. *(Kiacová, 2007)*

At the beginning of the 1960s, as a result of the town's increasing population, the construction of new housing was launched on the initiative of the municipal administration; these concrete panel blocks of flats differed completely in their architecture and urban layout from the concept of the town built in the 1950s. In the 1970s, the Miklovky suburb was added to the town, where over 750 individual houses were built. In 1971, the villages of Malý Kolačín and Veľký Kolačín, located around 2 km from the town were incorporated into Nová Dubnica. These were the only rural municipalities within Nová Dubnica with which the town had intensive links (for example, at the beginning of the construction of Nová Dubnica, children attended the primary school in Kolačín). This marked the end of the town's territorial growth.

This building and territorial growth of the town was a reaction to an important growth in its population. In 1958, Nová Dubnica had around 3,000 inhabitants. According to the 1961 census, Nová Dubnica had 4,474 inhabitants, 1034 flats and 26 blocks of flats. At the end of 1967, the town had 9,106 inhabitants, of which only 140 were pensioners, 923 were housewives and 289 were students. The town's age structure was very young: the percentage of the population aged up to 39 was 84% of the town's total population. Only 121 people were over 60. The educational structure was also relatively favourable: over 1/3 of the population aged over 15 had secondary education and above. In the 1980 census, Nová Dubnica already had 12,042 inhabitants, of which 7,040 were economically active (58.5%). *(Kiacová, 2007)* A large proportion was made up of housewives and women on maternity leave. By 1991, the population of Nová Dubnica had grown to 12,590; from then on, however, the town's population has decreased constantly. According to the projects approved by territorial planning, the town was designed to provide housing and services for 20,000 people. This was not achieved, far from it, even during the period of the town's greatest growth. *(Kiacová, 2007)*

Figure 27: Population development of Nová Dubnica (1961-2014) (people)




*Source: The authors' own edition based on data of Statistical Office of SR*

Despite the town's intensive building and population growth, Nová Dubnica did not have its own economic base and only fulfilled the function of housing employees who worked in businesses in Dubnica. The establishment of the Electrotechnical Research Institute (EVÚ) in 1969 helped Nová Dubnica a great deal in this extent, marking the beginning of the creation of the town's autonomous economic base. Since this time, Nová Dubnica began to profile itself gradually as a regional centre for the electrotechnical industry.

During the 1990s the extensive conversion of the armaments industry took place, significantly affecting the Trenčín region. This concerned in particular the factory in Dubnica, followed by Nová Dubnica since this is where the majority of the town's economically active population worked. In the 1990s, the industrial colossus in Dubnica encountered problems, and eventually collapsed. A large number of employees were made redundant, leading to a significant increase in unemployment in the town. The town of Nová Dubnica made a relatively rapid recovery, and its inhabitants gradually found employment in developing businesses in the town and its surroundings, as well as in Moravia.

The electrotechnical industry which made up Nová Dubnica's economic base was not so prone to the industrial crisis at the time. On the contrary, it developed rapidly, and several companies, including foreign businesses active in this industry came to Nová

Map 20: The spatial structure of the town Nová Dubnica


*Source: Google Maps*

Dubnica, thus combining Slovak and foreign capital and creating supranational companies. In 1995, the Slovak-Swedish company Q-NOVA opened in Nová Dubnica, and the German company LEONI Slovakia. Later, other companies mainly from the electrical industry were founded here; some were created by local businessmen from Nová Dubnica.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, the situation concerning facilities in Nová Dubnica has also changed. Municipal property was privatised together with businesses previously run by the state or town. Overall, 50 shops and facilities (e.g. the hotel and the building of the former school) were auctioned off during the small privatisation scheme, which had a significant impact on the running of businesses on the square, where the town's main facilities are situated. There were also changes in the area of housing in the 1990s, when previously company flats were offered to the town, and subsequently the great majority of the town's housing was sold off to the tenants occupying the flats. *(Gajdoš–Moravanská, 2015)*

Recently, the municipality has been trying mainly to revitalise the town's unfavourable age structure and stop the decrease in population, and trying to stabilise the settlement of mainly young people, both by creating conditions for their employment in the town and also by means of high-quality housing. A lack of free space for the construction of new housing, however, has proved limiting.

## Characteristics of the growth of the Nová Dubnica region and current processes of its formation

The reference framework for the presentation of the development of the Nová Dubnica region will be composed of the Trenčín region (NUTS III) on the one hand, and the Ilava district (NUTS IV) on the other, to which Nová Dubnica belongs administratively and statistically, as well as the nodal / municipal region whose centre is Trenčín and which is made up of the districts of Trenčín and Ilava.

The Trenčín region is situated in the central Považie region, which is one of the Slovak Republic's more developed territories. The common factor for this territory is the strong presence of industrial production, in particular mechanical engineering. The central Považie region is part of the main development corridor which is the result of the creation and localisation of economic centres from the socialist period. Together with the Bratislava, Košice and Banská Bystrica regions, it makes up the principal centres for regional development in Slovakia.

With a surface area of 4,502 $m^2$, the Trenčín region is one of Slovakia's smaller regions (9.2 percent of Slovakia's surface area). On December 31st 2014, the region's population was 601,392.

A traditional industrial base with a wide spectrum is characteristic of the region. It has a long tradition, in particular in the field of mechanical engineering, the textile, chemical and rubber industries. At present, it is one of Slovakia's economically strongest regions. The region is also attractive to foreign investors.

The region is characterised by a relatively high gross domestic product (GDP) per inhabitant (3rd place among the regions of the SR) and the unemployment rate in 2007 was 4.7%, rising to around 9% in 2014, nevertheless, remaining under the average of the SR. The region has maintained a stable proportion (around 4.5% in 2012) of direct foreign investments made in Slovakia. The region has the 3rd highest average gross monthly salary from among the regions of the SR. *(Statistical office of the SR)*

An important factor for the Trenčín region is its advantageous geographic location within Slovakia, as well as its strategic position within the east-west and north-south transport infrastructure. The region is crossed by the Bratislava – Žilina – Košice

motorway, as well as by the international railway route. Its position on the border with the Czech Republic is also important, carrying opportunities for developing cross-border cooperation.

The current settlement structure of the Trenčín region is composed of 276 municipalities, of which 18 have the status of towns and 257 are rural villages. The latter are mainly small villages with a population of under 2,000 (89% of the region's rural villages). The average size of villages in the region is 2,194 inhabitants. The region's centre and its largest town is Trenčín (pop. 55,886), which is the economic, cultural and educational centre of the regions; international fairs and exhibitions are held here, and it has a University and another institute of higher education. The demographic development in the region is characterised by a decline in the birth rate and an ageing population. The ageing index in the region is at 111.4, which greatly exceeds the national average in Slovakia (88.3). The region is characterised by the population's high level of education. *(Statistical office of the SR)*

The Trenčín region has a wide range of opportunities for developing tourism with favourable natural conditions, a suitable background for the development of rural tourism and agrotourism, a rich history, a variety of cultural and social events of international standing, as well as the significant potential of spa tourism (Trenčianske Teplice, Bojnice, Nimnica).

The present-day borders of the Trenčín region date from the 1996 Act the on territorial and administrative division of Slovakia. The Trenčín region has 9 districts, one of which is the Ilava district to which Nová Dubnica belongs. The Ilava district is the third smallest district in the Trenčín region. With its population of 60,194, it is one of Slovakia's medium-sized districts. The administrative centre of the district is the town of Ilava, which is one of Slovakia's smallest district towns (pop. 5,483). The district's territory lies on Slovakia's main development axis. The Ilava district has an industrial history and has traditional links with Dubnica's industrial potential. Over 50% of economically active people work in industry. A large majority of employees (75%) commute to work, mainly to Dubnica. Unemployment in the Ilava district (7,9 % in 2014) has long been below the Slovak average. *(Statistical office of the SR)* The district is one of the most urbanised in the Trenčín region. The district has excellent natural conditions for developing tourism.

In our analyses of the developmental changes in the Nová Dubnica region, we will focus our main attention on the nodal (municipal) region of Trenčín, to which Nová Dubnica belongs. The municipal region (MR) consists of the two districts of Trenčín and Ilava. The gravitational centre of this region is made up of towns and villages which are linked by natural, mutual associations and relations, which have emerged in the course of time despite changes to their administrative organisation. These are settlements linked together mainly by their association with the main industrial factories in the region, particularly from the period of industrialisation, which are in close proximity and easily accessible. With the exception of Trenčín, these are small towns.

Despite certain similarities, the towns in the MR have preserved their own specific characters, which were partly shaped by history and partly after the beginning of transformation and the impact of globalisation. With the exception of Nová Dubnica, these are historic towns founded in the 10$^{th}$ to 14$^{th}$ centuries, which have a relatively wide spectrum of economic activities and whose growth was mainly activated by industrialisation at the end of the 19$^{th}$ century and the beginning of the 20$^{th}$ century. The town of Trenčianske Teplice is different by the fact that it was built as a spa town, and this still remains its focal point. This partial difference in function is also characteristic of the regional centre, the town of Trenčín, whose functions are much more differentiated and whose diversification took place already during the pre-industrial and pre-transformation period (capital of the county and later of the region), and which currently has a wide range of functions. The status of Ilava is also special, only becoming a district town in 1996 and thus gaining several new functions which had a positive impact on its development during the period of transformation.

Since 1990, however, the municipalities in the MR are going through similar transformational changes: de-industrialisation and the conversion of industry (Dubnica, Trenčín) in the 1990s, processes for revitalising industry with a new industrial basis at the end of the 1990s and also globalisation with the participation of foreign capital, beginning in the 1990s. In this MR we can also note a process of suburbanisation, even though the urban structure of the MR is specific in that it consists mainly of small towns, some of which have no rural past. We identified the appearance

of suburbia only within the town of Trenčín in its southern and western part, which have no direct links to Nová Dubnica and its closest surroundings/towns. *(Gajdoš–Moravanská, 2011)*

Settlements in the MR are relatively densely connected among themselves by a network of relations and associations and by the use of the region's conditions and facilities. Work-based relations among settlements in the MR in particular are intensive.

The process of de-industrialisation and subsequent re-industrialisation, as well as the beginning of globalisation, took place in specific circumstances in this MR. This concerns the districts (particularly the district of Ilava, but also the town of Nová Dubnica), which inherited from the period of socialist industrialisation relatively mono-industrial structures, which was also reflected in the specific educational profile and qualifications of the population, which were often difficult to adapt to new circumstances. This was shown during the conversion period of the armament factories in Dubnica and Trenčín. The advantage of this MR was on the one hand a certain amount of diversification in its economic base, or that of the nearby Czech Republic, as well as the proximity and accessibility of new jobs, so that even less well-paid work (than that to which employees in industry were accustomed) was worthwhile, since the financial costs of commuting were not high. The situation was partially stabilised when several small and successful businesses were founded on the ruins of the Dubnica works, employing some of the former employees of the former factory. On top of this, several small and medium-sized businesses were founded in the MR, expanding the offer of jobs.

De-industrialisation and the conversion of industry had a negative impact on unemployment in the MR. The mechanical engineering works in Dubnica were not successfully transformed to their original extent. Since they employed over 15,000 people from the region before 1989, their demise had a negative impact on the whole region. In 1990, the unemployment rate in the MR was 1.3%, but by 1991 it had risen to 10.8%, stabilising at around 8% in subsequent years. After a significant rise in the 1990s, the unemployment rate fell gradually from around 7% in 2001 to around 2.5% in 2007; from 2008 it rose as a result of the beginning of the crisis to around 7% in 2010 and to over 9% in 2012. For this whole period, it still remains significantly below the Slovak average. *(Statistical office of the SR)*

The collapse of large industrial factories at the beginning of the 1990s and the subsequent rise in unemployment were not linked, however, to a more marked, long-term unemployment. For example, in 2001, in the district of Ilava there were only 1.75% long-term unemployed over one year, and in 2008 their number fell to 0.69%. The situation in the district of Trenčín (which had a wider variety of industries) was similar, where long-term unemployment fell from 1.76% in 2001 to 0.56% in 2008. In both cases, these figures are much lower than the Slovak average. *(Statistical office of the SR)*

The process of re-industrialisation shows the re-growth of industry, in particular in the Ilava district, while in the Trenčín district, the position of industry is reduced and another focus is preferred for an economic base. This is also shown by the development of the employee structure of the economically active population of the MR. Compared to the overall situation in Slovakia, where the position of industry in employment is relatively stabilised (around 27 to 28%), in the MR it is differentiated and is growing, in particularly in the Ilava district. The tradition of strong, industrial companies was maintained even after their transformation, and is kept up by several small and medium-sized businesses which use the area's industrial potential (in terms of equipment and people). From 2001 to 2011 there were further changes in employment in both districts. In the Ilava district, employment in industry (43.7%) and in the service sector (46.5%) are relatively balanced; in the Trenčín district, there has been a rise in employment in industry over the period in question to 32%. However, the service sector remains dominant (57.4%). *(Statistical office of the SR)*

Globalisation via foreign investments became present in the MR at the beginning of the 1990s. The structure of industry, an educated and cheap workforce and good business opportunities attracted businessmen from various countries. Industrial parks were built, where incoming capital found good conditions for doing business. For Nová Dubnica, the existence of a strong industrial region and industrial centres around the town is on the one hand an advantage from the point of view of job opportunities for its population, but on the other hand it gives it a certain competitive edge, since several industrial parks have been built in proximity to Nová Dubnica. The most significant industrial parks in the Trenčín region near Nová Dubnica are the Industrial Park in Trenčín, Dubnica Industrial Area and Ilava Industrial Area. All

the latter are dominated by foreign investors. At present, a new industrial park is also being built in Nová Dubnica, with the significant participation of foreign capital.

### *Economic, social and environmental problems*

Before analysing the situation and processes which shaped the town of Nová Dubnica and its development potential or obstacles, we consider it necessary to point out in brief some specific features of the town which, we hope, will enable the town's problems to be understood in the wider context (in terms of time and space) of facts which had a great impact on its development and present situation.

We have already described the beginnings of Nová Dubnica from an economic point of view. Its beginnings also have a specific social and socio-cultural aspect. The creation of the town itself on a greenfield site was a specific social phenomenon related to the creation of a local community. People from the whole of Czechoslovakia moved here, mainly from Slovakia. The population which came here in great numbers and in waves was socially, economically and culturally mixed. Mainly young people came here, wanting to lay the foundations for their personal and family life. They were allocated flats to rent and given relatively well-paid work in a prosperous company and opportunities for social mobility. This significantly increased the stability of their settlement in the town.

The fact that the town was settled in waves was reflected in the population's markedly homogenous age, social and employment structure, which is currently seen in the high proportion of the population of post-productive age and with a high index of ageing. The clear population migration, particularly among young people attracted by the much wider range of facilities and diversified work opportunities in nearby large towns than on offer in Nová Dubnica, also has an impact on the town's unfavourable population situation.

Nová Dubnica consists of two specific town quarters. One of Nová Dubnica's town quarters is a compact town-style residential area, with blocks of flats and individual houses and with appropriate facilities. The second part of Nová Dubnica is Kolačín, composed of the former rural villages of Veľký Kolačín and Malý

Kolačín.There is a strip of land around 1 km wide which has not been built up between the residential areas of Nová Dubnica and Kolačín, through which the road linking the two parts of the town passes. In terms of buildings, Kolačín is more homogenous and is characterised by individual housing. Villas have lately been built here by richer inhabitants of Nová Dubnica and its surroundings. Both parts of the town have retained certain specific social and socio-cultural features which have a partial impact on their mutual relations. Kolačín retains its "rural nature", as reflected both in social relations and in the function of the local community and the ability to come together if joint interests are to be carried out. Their attitude to the town of Nová Dubnica is of slight disrespect (Kolačín is 780 years old and Nová Dubnica only 58). The inhabitants of Nová Dubnica on the other hand look on those who live in Kolačín as villagers.

When presenting Nová Dubnica's selected opportunities, we focus on the relevant areas which represent on the one hand the town's positive development opportunities, and on the other its obstacles. We concentrate timewise on the transformation period, also marked by globalisation processes. We base ourselves mainly on information obtained from available literature and data sources and interviews with experts and their reflections on the situation during the periods in question.[2]

## *Development and problems of the town and region's economic base*

The development of Nová Dubnica's economic base was significantly influenced by the fact that the town was built as a residential area for employees of the mechanical engineering works in Dubnica. For this reason, it is no surprise that until 1989 Nová Dubnica did not create its own economic base, with the exception

[2] The presentation of the town's growth opportunities and problems from the point of view of experts is based on a survey which we carried out among planners, representatives of local and regional government, architects, businessmen and inhabitants knowledgeable about the situation in the town, whom we all consider to be experts on the town. The methodological basis for the survey was interviews with experts based on a sample questionnaire provided by the project's main administrator. 10 respondents participated in the survey, of whom almost all have lived for a long time in the town, or have worked for a long time in positions important for the town's life and development. We call this set of respondents "experts".

of the Electrotechnical Research Institute founded in 1969, which was a research and development centre for the mechanical engineering works in Dubnica. *(Kiacová, 2007)*

Fundamental economic changes only affected the region after 1989. The conversion of the armaments production in Dubnica has a marked negative impact, reflected by a large increase in unemployment in the region and in Nová Dubnica. The high rise in the unemployment rate was also linked to a growth in the population's work migration, mainly within the region. This rate, however, was able to be reduced in a relatively short period of time, aided by the gradual re-industrialisation which took in Nová Dubnica as early as at the beginning of the 1990s, as opposed to the majority of industrial towns in Slovakia.

Following the Electrotechnical Research Institute, several industrial companies focused primarily on electrotechnical production were gradually set up in the town. Branches of foreign companies such as Leoni Slovakia, Neways Slovakia (Q-NOVA), Delta Elektronics, Encis, focused on the electrotechnical industry gradually opened in the town, bringing in foreign capital. Alongside the latter, Novodubnickáelektronickáspoločnosť, RMC and other companies with only Slovak capital grew. To a smaller extent, there was a growth in the manufacture of furniture (Essex, J&J), which helped create a whole range of industrial jobs in a town which originally only had a residential function. Nová Dubnica thus avoided the fate of several industrial towns in Slovakia which had to change fundamentally their economic base, which was usually also very demanding in social terms. One of the town's other advantages was that the restitutions of private property, which had a significant impact on most Slovak towns, played an incomparably smaller role in Nová Dubnica since the town was only founded in 1953.

At present, the infrastructure is being prepared in Nová Dubnica to build a new industrial park, which should offer around 500 jobs. The industrial park, however, does not have a high level of support among the town's population, who think that no more industrial companies should be built within the town's borders. On the other hand, they see its benefits in terms of expanding the range of jobs and attracting mainly young people to the town. *(Gajdoš–Moravanská, 2015)*

It appears that Nová Dubnica's position in the centre of an industrial area and close to the Bratislava – Žilina – Košice motor-

way is very attractive for investors, and the high quality of the development and production of the electrotechnical industry increases Nová Dubnica's attraction for businesses active in this sector.

The mainly favourable opportunities for the town in the economic area are complicated by the narrow focus of the industry's structure which neither the town nor its inhabitants wish to change, by insufficient opportunities for new construction and ownership problems which are yet to be resolved, as well as by the underdeveloped market in building land. The migration of specialists with a high level of education away from Nová Dubnica as a result of its lack of opportunities is also problematic.

### *Development of the town's infrastructure and living conditions*

Since its beginnings, Nová Dubnica has been characterised by above-average facilities which did not match its size but rather its status as a "model socialist town". A complete range offacilities was already part of Kroha's plan for the town, with shops and services, school, facilities for leisure time activities etc.

The status of a model socialist town held several advantages for Nová Dubnica, but was also limiting. The facilities for its population which were above standard were a clear advantage, making the town into a shopping centre even within the micro-region. In 1961, Nová Dubnica had 31 shops with various goods for its inhabitants; in 1969 there were 23 food shops and 21 specialist shops and 1 public canteen. *(Kiacová, 2007)* On the other hand, the construction of any religious buildings was forbidden, and no religious institutions were allowed to be active. The town only started building churches after 1990, when a Roman Catholic church (2005) and a Lutheran church (2012) were built, followed by another Roman Catholic church in Kolačíne (2011). A Christian Centre was also established.

After 1989, there were differences in the development of various sectors dealing with living conditions in the town. On the whole, the situation grew worse. In particular, the situation concerning the range of shops and services grew worse, and the latter were greatly reduced. At the beginning of the 1990s, shops were privatised and their structure changed. Many existing shops and services closed down and were replaced by pubs and gambling centres. In spatial terms, these changes mainly affected the facilities in the

natural centre of Nová Dubnica, Mierové námestie, where facilities and town services were concentrated. This change is evaluated by the population as very negative.

The town has standard facilities for its population: there is a post office, three banks and several shops and services, a health centre and the municipal police. The town ensures the recycling of waste; it has a collection centre for voluminous waste and building waste, which is run as a centre for disadvantaged citizens. There are two three-star hotels in the town (with around 100 beds) which also house restaurants, cafés, a fitness and a wellness centre. The town also runs the Pax cinema, which was the first panoramic cinema in Slovakia and also provides premises for a wide range of cultural and social events. *(The program development of the town Nová Dubnica)*

On the other hand, the town's population is too small for larger shopping centres to be interested in building facilities here. This area of services, however, can be seen in the town's position in relation to surrounding, larger towns with easy transport access, where people go to do their shopping. With a car, this is no problem; on top of this, a large part of the population works in these towns and uses their facilities.

Taking into consideration the town's ageing age structure (over 20% of the town's population is of a post-productive age), conditions created for this population category are an important part of the town's facilities. There is a retirement home in the town; however, its capacity of 54 clients is not sufficient and the town has been trying to expand it for a long time. There is a care service in the town which looks after 70 senior citizens on average. Pensioners also have a pensioners' club, to whose activities the town makes a contribution. The town's administration also contributes to meals for senior citizens by providing reductions on lunches in the retirement home. *(Gajdoš–Moravanská, 2015)*

The town's nursery and school facilities are sufficient. The town offers a wide range of alternative forms of education. There are four nursery schools, and the church school also offers pre-school education. In terms of primary education, there is a "town" primary school, a private primary school and aprimary art school which also includes a leisure activity centre. A church school also offers primary education, with a 4-year and 8-year secondary school completing the nursery and primary education offered.

The town also has a technical grammar school, a private centre offering special pedagogical advice and several private language schools. Schools in the town's close surroundings (Trenčín, Dubnica) provide sufficient options for secondary and higher education. Falling school rolls led to the closure of one primary school and to the use of this building for establishing the primary art school and children's leisure activity centre.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, the town has been trying to resolve a set of problems concerning the residential environment and living conditions in the town, which has met with both positive and negative reactions from the population.[3] The inhabitants evaluate as positive particularly the renovation and modernisation of buildings and public spaces in the town, which have been carried out thanks to European Union funds. The latter were used to renovate the school buildings and to regenerate the central town zone and Mierové námestie. The construction of religious buildings, (3 churches, and the Christian centre) which Nová Dubnica did not previously have, is also perceived in a positive light, together with the foundation of a secondary school. *(Danielová, 2008)*

On the other hand, the end to the construction of housing is evaluated as negative, which has been reflected in a fall in the town's population combined with a lower natural population increase. Insufficient accommodation facilities (hotel), a lack of rental flats, the insufficient capacity of the retirement home, the lack of parking spaces, the insufficient use of non-residential premises for rental or for the town's needs, the lack of finance for maintaining town buildings, the insufficient and uneconomical use of school facilities due to falling rolls are also seen as problem areas. The closure of the town outdoor swimming-pool and the open-air cinema can also be seen as negative changes, together with the sale of certain non-residential buildings belonging to the town, such as the heating plant. *(Danielová, 2008)*

[3] We are using information obtained from a survey of Nová Dubnica's population *(Danielová, 2008)* which followed how the inhabitants perceive changes in the town after 1989. Two groups of respondents participated in the survey. The first group was composed of 120 respondents representing the "older generation" who lived here during the socialist period and was of working age. The second group was made up of 46 respondents representing the "younger generation" (aged 15 to 25) who were born after 1989. We call these respondents in this survey "inhabitants".

## *Housing and the development of the urban environment*

The construction of housing has always held an important place in presenting the situation and development of the living conditions of a town's population. During the socialist period, it also reflected the state's social policy priorities, where housing construction played a key role.

The quality of housing in the town is highly thought of and is one of the main reasons for the town's attractiveness and the satisfaction of its inhabitants. Until the beginning of the 1990s, the great majority of the town's flats were made up of company flats owned by factories in Dubnica. This housing was transferred into the ownership of the town at the beginning of the 1990s, which privatised it and sold it off into the private ownership of the then tenants of the flats. As a result, there was a fall in the number of flats held by the town. At present, the town owns only 151 flats. Most of these are flats which tenants did not ask to buy, or could not request to do so because of debts owed to the town. The town thus to a certain extent lost its housing stock, which it could have used as social housing, or as first-time flats for young people and young families. This was reflected in the increased migration of young people to surrounding municipalities where a flat or piece of land for the construction of a house could be obtained.

The town's housing situation is influenced by the fact that very little was built in Nová Dubnica for many years. From 1991 to 2001 there was a significant lack of housing construction. During this period, only 6 new flats were built. In 2001, the town's total number of flats was 4,343 in 1,086 blocks of flats. After 2003, the situation changed only slightly. From 2003 to 2013, only 99 flats were built in the town; the majority of these were in the Kolačín town area. *(Statistical office of the SR)*

As a result, there was a lack of flats for young people and young families who are leaving the town mainly for reasons of housing. Stabilising or attracting young people to the town is one of the town's long-term priorities. To date, however, this policy has not be implemented due to a lack of available land for new housing construction, since the spatial aspect of the town's growth was not taken into much account when drawing up the boundaries in the 1950s. The town is trying to settle the ownership of land but it is a long and drawn-out process. The town was able to obtain

Table 20: Change of population, permanently occupied flats and houses (1970-2011)

| town/ district region/ SR | 1970 | | | 1980 | | | 1991 | | | 2001 | | | 2011 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | popula-tion | flats | houses | popula-tion | flats | houses | popula-tion | flats | houses | popula-tion | flats | houses | popula-tion | flats | houses |
| Nová Dubnica | 10906 | 2795 | 423 | 12488 | 3566 | 715 | 12590 | 4217 | 1020 | 12358 | 4223 | 1052 | 11466 | 4359 | 1137 |
| Ilava district | 47353 | 11711 | 7122 | 53879 | 15297 | 7769 | 61047 | 18624 | 8125 | 62042 | 19298 | 8001 | 60578 | 20050 | 8293 |
| Trenčín district | 96063 | 24572 | 16122 | 106776 | 30662 | 17721 | 111366 | 34394 | 17819 | 112767 | 35678 | 17831 | 113115 | 38868 | 19032 |
| Trenčín region | 515916 | 131850 | 93136 | 568498 | 163590 | 101907 | 600575 | 186212 | 100296 | 605582 | 191081 | 98568 | 594328 | 199546 | 101197 |
| Slovakia | 4537290 | 1150148 | 815896 | 4991168 | 1413932 | 869839 | 5274335 | 1617828 | 864357 | 5379455 | 1665536 | 862274 | 5397036 | 1776698 | 905815 |

| town/ district region/ SR | 1970/80 | | | 1980/91 | | | 1991/01 | | | 2001/11 | | | 1970/1991 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | popula-tion | flats | houses | popula-tion | flats | houses | popula-tion | flats | houses | popula-tion | flats | houses | popula-tion | flats | houses |
| Nová Dubnica | 1582 | 771 | 292 | 102 | 651 | 305 | -232 | 6 | 32 | -892 | 136 | 85 | 1684 | 1422 | 597 |
| Ilava district | 6526 | 3586 | 647 | 7168 | 3327 | 356 | 995 | 674 | -124 | -1464 | 752 | 292 | 13694 | 6913 | 1003 |
| Trenčín district | 10713 | 6090 | 1599 | 4590 | 3732 | 98 | 1401 | 1284 | 12 | 348 | 3190 | 1201 | 15303 | 9822 | 1697 |
| Trenčín region | 52582 | 31740 | 8771 | 32077 | 22622 | -1611 | 5007 | 4869 | -1728 | -11254 | 8465 | 2629 | 84659 | 54362 | 7160 |
| Slovakia | 453878 | 263784 | 53943 | 283167 | 203896 | -5482 | 105120 | 47708 | -2083 | 17581 | 111162 | 43541 | 737045 | 467680 | 48461 |

*Source: Statistical office of SR*

land from private owners and to build the infrastructure for the construction of 46 new houses in the Dlhé diely residential area. The town built two blocks of rental flats (36 flats) and another two blocks were built by a private investor.

A specific problem in the town's housing and urban environment lies in the architecture from the period of socialist realism, the style in which the original town was built and which has been preserved to date, despite the fact that it is not protected by the Heritage Office. For the moment, it is protected by the inhabitants of the town themselves together with the town authorities who want to preserve the town's original architecture. At the moment, these flats are privately owned. The risk of modifications being made to this architecture is related to the lack of funds for maintaining this housing. When the owners of the flats in these blocks change (especially young people), the risk of modifications being made to the valuable facades of the buildings increases. This is already happening in the interiors. The town does not want to step into this process of preservation, since there are many administrative obstacles involved.

The town's housing is differentiated in several ways: by material, the time and type of construction and by social status in the last few decades. The town can be divided into four units specific by their type of housing, which are gradually also taking on specific social features. The base is made up of the centre with its historic buildings from the period of socialist realism, where the first inhabitants of the town live. It is completed by concrete panel housing built in the 1960s, where people moving to Nová Dubnica came to live at that time. In the 1970s, the Miklovky area was built, where there are individual houses and where the inhabitants of the town who wanted to build a house and had the necessary funds to do so settled. Today, this is where the richer classes from the town are concentrated. The fourth type is housing of a rural nature situated in the town's Kolačín area, where a growing estate of villa-type housing is beginning to dominate as a result of intensive construction over the last 10 years. In the near future, a private project for a new villa area with a capacity of around 160 houses should be built in this area. The new Dlhé diely residential area, where houses and blocks of flats have started to be built, will also provide new housing.

Table 21: Ownership of the permanently inhabited flats (2011)

| | Nová Dubnica | Ilava district | Trenčín district | Trenčín region | Slovakia |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| permanently occupied flats – total | 4 359 | 20 050 | 38 868 | 199 546 | 1 776 698 |
| the flats in residential houses | 3 080 | 10 255 | 18 226 | 85 646 | 764 100 |
| flats in family house | 802 | 6 776 | 15 815 | 83 018 | 744 203 |
| proportion of flats in family house | 18,40 | 33,80 | 40,69 | 41,60 | 41,89 |
| municipal flats | 27 | 132 | 488 | 4 383 | 32 239 |
| cooperative flats | 123 | 1 090 | 905 | 9 520 | 62 873 |
| other | 204 | 1 124 | 253 | 10 805 | 97 510 |
| unoccupied flats | 207 | 2 090 | 4 215 | 27 691 | 205 729 |
| proportion of unoccupied flats | 4,52 | 9,38 | 9,72 | 12,09 | 10,31 |

*Source: Statistical office of SR*

## *Socio-economic and environmental problems*

Part of the transformation process in Slovakia involved a growth in social and economic inequalities both among the population and between towns and regions. This phenomenon had a great impact on the lives of individuals, families as well as town and regional communities. Socio-economic differentiation, present latently under socialism though little visible, became more obvious during this period. These social inequalities can take different forms and shapes, varying according to the type of environment, the nature of the settlement and the influence of other factors.

According to experts, there are social differences among the population in Nová Dubnica, but in the town environment they are not particularly noticeable and do not tend to spill over into social tension. Social differences are reflected by the population. People know each other and know who belongs where.

Deepening socio-economic differences are beginning to become more and more apparent in the town's social and community life. Socially polarised groups only rarely meet together. This mainly concerns businessmen who have their own specific activities and do not usually meet other people. Social differences are also partially reflected in housing, particularly as far residential areas with individual housing are concerned, where one's socio-economic status can be evidenced. This is apparent in the Miklovky area and in Kolačín. It is not so apparent in the older residential areas, despite the fact that the population even in this part of town is socio-economically differentiated. The transformation of society brought with it the legalisation of wealth and poverty, and here too people are beginning to show outwardly their right to be wealthy and to show their wealth (house, brand and number of cars, good schools, activities, etc.).

The population's salaries are also a source of social difference. During the socialist period, the inhabitants were used to a certain standard, because their income from industry was relatively high compared to other sectors. Town archives show that the monthly salary of employees in industry was around 1,700 CSK, which was higher than in other professions or economic sectors. The average cost of occupying a 1-bedroom flat was 365 CSK per month *(Kiacová, 2007)*. During transformation, employees' income was differentiated and reduced on the whole, which had a great impact on their socio-economic situation. Income from employment in Slovakia is very variable depending on the type of employer. It is often assumed that employees can earn more in foreign companies than in local or Slovak companies. According to the opinion of experts, differences in salaries between those employed in local Slovak companies and those employed in foreign-owned companies are not significant in Nová Dubnica; they are almost non-existent for manual workers. Foreign companies can pay managers better, but working conditions and work relations in foreign companies are often bad. The differences in salary are also not more significant because foreign companies have adapted to the standards in place here. Dissatisfaction with one's salary exists regardless of the company's owner. Alongside their salary, some companies offer employees other benefits, for example in the field of culture, sports, leisure or health. However, people are beginning to take more and more into account not the salary itself, but

rather job security, because not all companies in the town and region are stable. Owners change, the production programme changes, companies close down or move to another town, and people are not tempted to work there even for a higher salary.

### *Social exclusion and its resolution*

The problem of social exclusion is a new phenomenon in the town. Just as the town was characterised by the homogenity of its population's age structure, the town was also relatively homogenous in the social area, and differences between inhabitants were minor. In effect, everyone who lived here was provided with housing via their work in the factory in Dubnica. In this way, social circumstances were very similar.

According to expert opinions, the problem of social exclusion does not appear too significant in the town. There are no problems based on ethnic group. The problem of social exclusion in the town is perceived in different ways by the population. People who are not directly responsible for their difficult social situation and have been victims of a loss of employment or find it difficult to find employment because of their age, education or personal circumstances perceive their situation differently from those for whom it is a voluntary choice of lifestyle, and who are satisfied with such a life. This type of attitude to life is seen in the homeless population, who number around 12 to 15 in the town. Hidden poverty exists among the unemployed (around 530 people in 2013), but it cannot be seen in public, since they live in families, where they are able to survive with their family's help.

In Nová Dubnica, there are not many organisations which might participate in resolving problems of social exclusions. Non-governmental organisations are not involved in this field, either. The social situation in the town is not bad enough, according to them, for them to have to focus specifically on this problem. Groups of interested people and individuals willing to resolve these problems are more involved in the social area. For example, the Catholic charity called Katolická charitais active, organising activities such as collecting clothes etc. The town also organises activities in this area and has opened a collection centre where people can bring clothing, food and furniture which are then made available to socially vulnerable people from the town. Help from citizens is

more passive, and not direct, even though there is an interest in actively helping these people. Some people, however, have had bad experiences with them and have given up activities in this field. There is a general opinion that this is a problem which is difficult to solve for the town and other interest groups, and only serves to help reduce the consequences of badly functioning mechanisms at state level. It is first and foremost a question of state policy, followed by local specific cases which the locals know well. These two sources of help should come together.

### *The environment and the town's environmental problems*

The environmental quality of Nová Dubnica's surroundings is high, both within and outside the town's built-up area. There are forests around the town, which make up around 35% of the total surface area of the town's cadastre. The town's land can be described as ecologically stable with a very favourable ecological quality of landscape structure.

The favourable ecological state of the town's built-up area is the result of several factors. The first is the fact that a high amount of public greenery and parks was part of the original planning concept for the town and was carried out in the 1950s and 1960s; this situation remains in place today. Another factor contributing to the favourable state of the town's environment is the absence of through traffic in the town; the shift of a part of the through traffic from near the town to the motorway also had some positive effects.

Industry located in the town is mainly focused on light manufacture, with a smaller impact on the environment. The town's projects intend to continue building the town's economic base on these lines, but also maintaining the quality of the environment and placing emphasis on good quality housing as the main value of the town. The town is participating in thisby focusing on ecologically-friendly technologies for manufacturing heat and hot water (gas, and mainly wood chips).

There is no large source of pollution in Nová Dubnica itself, and in its surroundings there is one larger source of atmospheric pollution: the sugar beet factory in Trenčianska Teplá. Only small and medium-sized sources of atmospheric pollution are registered in the town.The town has a widespread system of waste recycling. The town has natural gas and water and sewage systems.

Inhabitants consider these ecological features of the town's environment as a very positive attribute for its attractiveness and quality of life. This is why they are sensitive to any possible threat to the town's ecological environment brought on by an attempt to increase employment by building industrial parks etc. Their fears are mainly conditioned by the town's very small territorial surface area which has preserved its ecological qualities, and any intervention in the town's environment, whether the construction of housing or of industrial buildings, represents a possible threat.

On the other hand, the town authorities perceived as unfavourable the population's insufficient awareness of protecting and working with their environment, as well as the poor involvement of the population and interest groups in developing the town and preserving its ecological qualities.

### *Town participation in inter-municipal cooperation in the region*

Although towns and villages often find themselves competing against each other for investments, human resources etc., mutual cooperation in the preparation of conceptual materials, or for carrying out more demanding investment activities is beneficial. This applies particularly to towns within a single micro-region. It has been shown, however, that in this area, as in others, developmental changes take place, and factors which have an impact on the interest or lack of interest in inter-town cooperation change rapidly, and are often subjectively or politically motivated.

The growth in Nová Dubnica's inter-town cooperation with surrounding municipalities is proof of this shift. According to the experts, cooperation between towns within the micro-region is minimal and only occasional. Each town tries to be self-sufficient. This present stage was only reached recently. At the beginning of the 1990s, when all municipalities were just beginning to learn about self-government, municipalities were interested in cooperation. Even Nová Dubnica tried to enter inter-municipal cooperation movements, but in time it reduced this involvement as a result of deepening differences in their views about how to resolve with the surrounding towns joint problems over their land, especially those of an investment nature. At the beginning, the towns proceeded together, but gradually there was a decrease in interest and now the willingness to cooperate is much lower. The present nature of cooperation, of

contacts between the administrations of towns within the micro-regions is more or less just a formality. The influence of the political affiliation of the mayors of towns, or of the people representing the towns on company boards, is becoming more and more significant in the complicated world of inter-town cooperation. Everyone tries to resolve their problems on their own, and every town defends its own interests, especially when it comes to investors.

Nová Dubnica, too, has been using a similar strategy recently. At present, it has no cooperation with the surrounding towns, and does not need it very much either. Over the last few years, the town has managed to win investments on its own; its self-confidence is growing. According to representatives of the town, the absence of close cooperation with the surrounding towns is, however, more the consequence of a lack of interest expressed by the surrounding larger towns, which do not want to "stoop down" to small Nová Dubnica's level. Any realistically existing and functional cooperation in the town is based more on personal relations between mayors. Contracts with surrounding towns in the fields of culture, sport or leisure are ensured using this channel, as well as consultations on problems and development strategies.

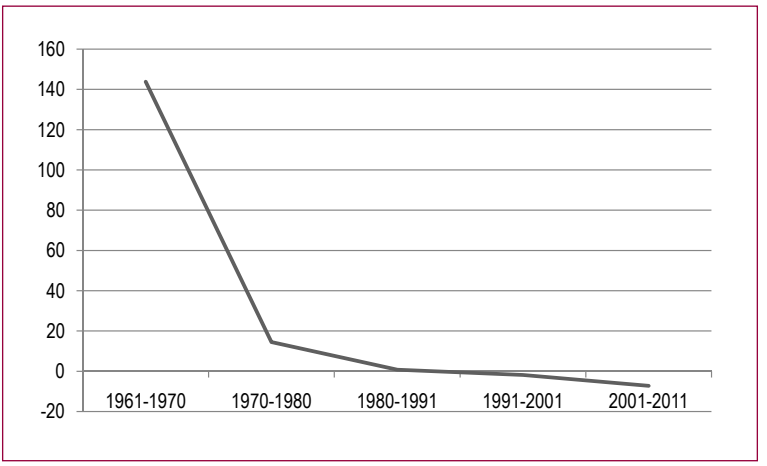
## The socio-demographic structures and socio-spatial polarisation

### *Growth in the town's population*

In 1958, Nová Dubnica had around 3,000 inhabitants. According to the 1961 census, Nová Dubnica had 4,474 inhabitants, and by the end of 1967 the town had a population of 9,106. The milestone in the town's history was the period from 1961 to 1970, when the basis for its settlement was built with the arrival of over 10,000 people. Until 1980, the population grew to 12,488. The main reason for this grown in population was the continuing building development of the Miklovky area and the incorporation of the villages of Veľký Kolačín and Malý Kolačín into the town. *(Kiacová, 2007)*

Since the 1990s, the town's population growth has been unfavourable. In 1991, the town recorded its highest population (12,590). Since then, it has seen a constant fall in population. From 1991 to 2001, the population fell by 185, but over the fol-

Figure 28: Intensity of increase/decrease of Nová Dubnica's population (1961-2011) (%)




*Source: Statistical office of SR*

lowing decade (2001 – 2011), it fell by 928. The population continued to fall during the period from 2011 to 2014, when it fell by 216 people. From 1991 to 2014, the town's population fell by 1,328, which is a fall of over 10.5% of its population compared with 1991. *(Statistical office of the SR)*

Natural population increase and migration are both causes of this negative population growth. From 2000 to 2013, there was no year in which the town recorded a positive outcome, either in natural increase or growth from migration.

In 1991, only 32.8% of the town's population were original (autochthonous) inhabitants, who had lived in the town since birth. In 2001, this proportion of Nová Dubnica's population had risen to 38.5%. In the following period, there was once more a fall in the proportion of original inhabitants, and Nová Dubnica is characterised by a relatively low number of autochthonous inhabitants. Of the town's population in 2011, only 29.1% have been living in the town since birth. The specific circumstances of the town's foundation can be seen here, since the majority of people who moved here after the town's foundation are still alive. The situation in surrounding towns, whose population also grew mainly as a result of migration in the 1950s and 1970s, is similar. Trenčín is an exception, where over half its population in 2011 had been living in the town since birth. *(Statistical office of the SR)*

Table 22: Characteristics of populaton change (natural and migratory increase/decrease) (2001-2013) (‰)

| town/ district region/ SR | Natural increase per 1000 inhabitants | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2001 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
| Nová Dubnica | -2,76 | -3,37 | -2,24 | -0,66 | -2,09 | -1,42 | -0,34 | -0,93 | -1,11 | -0,44 | -2,62 | -0,79 |
| Ilava district | -0,48 | -2,22 | -0,65 | -1,82 | 0,15 | -0,29 | -0,53 | 0,13 | 0,46 | 2,08 | -1,04 | 1,34 |
| Trenčin district | -1,07 | -1,32 | -0,72 | -0,79 | -1,14 | -1,01 | 0 | 0,25 | 0,89 | 0,65 | -0,13 | -0,07 |
| Trenčin region | -1,08 | -1,85 | -1,10 | -1,58 | -1,33 | -1,43 | -0,77 | -0,36 | 0,18 | 0,26 | -1,05 | -0,48 |
| Slovakia | -0,16 | -0,10 | 0,35 | 0,18 | 0,11 | 0,11 | 0,78 | 1,53 | 1,28 | 1,65 | 0,57 | 0,51 |

| town/ district region/ SR | Migration increase per 1000 inhabitants | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2001 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
| Nová Dubnica | -6,48 | -4,85 | -4,14 | -2,24 | -1,17 | -0,75 | -2,19 | -9,29 | -6,73 | -1,05 | -4,54 | -4,13 |
| Ilava district | -2,56 | -0,96 | -0,1 | -0,96 | -1,18 | -1,99 | -2,05 | -3,22 | -2,27 | -1,17 | -0,55 | -2,41 |
| Trenčin district | 0,84 | 0,54 | 0,81 | 2,97 | 3,71 | 3,56 | 3,52 | -0,14 | 1,23 | 1,26 | 1,72 | 2,02 |
| Trenčin region | -0,65 | -0,36 | -0,18 | -0,09 | 0,43 | 1,41 | 0,81 | -0,72 | -0,84 | -0,71 | -0,68 | -0,81 |
| Slovakia | 0,19 | 0,26 | 0,53 | 0,63 | 0,71 | 1,26 | 1,31 | 0,81 | 0,62 | 0,55 | 0,63 | 0,44 |

*Source: Statistical office of SR*

### *Age structure*

The situation concerning the age structure of the town's population still remains influenced (even though to a lesser extent) by its period of foundation and the manner in which the town was settled. During the period of settlement, mainly young people of the same age came to the town and have grown old here. The town's age structure at the beginning of its foundation was very young. For example, in 1967, the proportion of the population aged under 39 was 84%, and only 121 people were aged over 60. *(Kiacová, 2007)* The homogenous nature of this age structure could be seen to different extents throughout the town's period of existence, and makes up its specific feature. The social structure of the town's population was similarly homogenous, influenced at the beginning by people carrying out similar work and being employed in the same factory. Later, as a result of natural increase and migratory movements, there was a certain differentiation both in the town population's age and social structure.

The age structure in 1991 still showed a relatively favourable situation, since 22.2% of the population were of pre-working age, 64.8% of working age and only 13% were of post-working age. The ageing index was 58.7. In 2001, the situation changed markedly, when the proportion of children fell to 16.1%, people of working age also fell to 60.8%, and the proportion of people of retirement age increased significantly to 22.5%. The ageing index increased briskly to 135.7%. From 2001 to 2011 the age structure in the town changed significantly. Children in the population fell to 11.2%; the proportion of people of working age rose importantly to 69.8%, but there was fall to 19.1% in people of post-working age. Nevertheless, the ageing index rose to 171.7. This trend is continuing, and in 2013 there was a slight fall in people of pre-working age to 11.1%, the working population fell to 68.6% and the proportion of people of post-working age rose to 20.3%. The ageing index rose to 182.4, which is much higher than the average value in Slovakia (88.3). *(Statistical office of the SR)*

### *Level of education of the population*

The level of education of Nová Dubnica's population was at its very beginnings marked by the requirements of the production in Dubnica's factory, where the main emphasis was on secondary or

Table 23: Age structure and proportion of different age groups (1991-2014) (people; %)

| town/ district region/ SR | 1991 | | | 2001 | | | 2011 | | | 2014 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 0-14 | 15-64 | 65+ | 0-14 | 15-64 | 65+ | 0-14 | 15-64 | 65+ | 0-14 | 15-64 | 65+ |
| Nová Dubnica | 2794 | 9186 | 610 | 1983 | 3513 | 1530 | 1276 | 7999 | 2191 | 1 253 | 7 693 | 2 316 |
| Ilava district | 16175 | 40035 | 4837 | 11524 | 17958 | 6434 | 7 835 | 45 054 | 7 674 | 7 994 | 43 675 | 8 525 |
| Trenčín district | 26714 | 72504 | 12148 | 19479 | 33987 | 14508 | 15 354 | 81 307 | 16 443 | 15 767 | 79 905 | 18 191 |
| Trenčín region | 148428 | 390627 | 61520 | 108862 | 180595 | 71733 | 79 113 | 433 067 | 82 067 | 78 598 | 422 012 | 90 623 |
| Slovakia | 1 313 961 | 3 415 721 | 544 653 | 1 015 493 | 1626416 | 610 923 | 832 572 | 3 881 088 | 690 662 | 830 181 | 3 834 289 | 756 879 |

| town/ district region/ SR | 1991 | | | 2001 | | | 2011 | | | 2014 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 0-14 | 15-64 | 65+ | 0-14 | 15-64 | 65+ | 0-14 | 15-64 | 65+ | 0-14 | 15-64 | 65+ |
| Nová Dubnica | 22,2 | 73,0 | 4,8 | 16,0 | 71,6 | 12,4 | 11,1 | 69,8 | 19,1 | 11,1 | 68,31 | 20,56 |
| Ilava district | 26,1 | 64,5 | 7,9 | 18,6 | 71,1 | 10,4 | 12,9 | 74,4 | 12,7 | 13,3 | 72,56 | 14,16 |
| Trenčín district | 23,7 | 64,3 | 10,9 | 17,3 | 69,9 | 12,9 | 13,6 | 71,9 | 14,5 | 13,9 | 70,18 | 15,98 |
| Trenčín region | 24,5 | 64,5 | 10,2 | 18,0 | 70,2 | 11,8 | 13,3 | 72,9 | 13,8 | 13,3 | 71,38 | 15,33 |
| Slovakia | 24,8 | 63,5 | 10,3 | 18,9 | 69,8 | 11,4 | 15,4 | 71,8 | 12,8 | 15,3 | 70,73 | 13,96 |

*Source: Statistical office of SR*

Table 24: Change in level of education (1991-2011) (%)

| town/ district, region/SR | Nová Dubnica | Ilava district | Trenčín district | Trenčín region | Slovakia |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Primary education 1991 | 24,57 | 31,75 | 32,92 | 41,50 | 38,20 |
| Primary education 2001 | 16,96 | 20,59 | 20,71 | 28,16 | 26,35 |
| Primary education 2011 | 12,05 | 13,78 | 13,00 | 19,39 | 17,96 |
| Lower secondary 1991 | 28,04 | 32,52 | 30,32 | 30,51 | 28,15 |
| Lower secondary 2001 | 27,12 | 32,52 | 31,58 | 32,63 | 29,40 |
| Lower secondary 2011 | 24,9 | 29,70 | 28,86 | 31,10 | 27,60 |
| Upper secondary 1991 | 34,95 | 27,23 | 27,14 | 21,44 | 24,33 |
| Upper secondary 2001 | 38,79 | 34,83 | 34,55 | 29,56 | 32,05 |
| Upper secondary 2011 | 40,02 | 38,86 | 35,53 | 33,82 | 35,41 |
| Univesity 1991 | 12,12 | 7,12 | 8,76 | 5,42 | 7,75 |
| Univesity 2001 | 14,69 | 9,36 | 11,15 | 7,43 | 9,85 |
| Univesity 2011 | 22,5 | 16,09 | 17,79 | 13,51 | 16,57 |

*Source: Statistical office of SR*

lower secondary professional education. On the other hand, the favourable conditions under socialism for workers to educate themselves and improve their qualifications were reflected in a positive way in the level of education of the town's population, which was high at the time compared to the Slovak national average.

The 1991 census shows that of the town's population aged 15 and over, 24.6% had received only a primary education, 63.2% had received a secondary education and 12.2% a university education. In the 2001 census, there was a significant fall in primary education to 17.3%, a growth in secondary education to 67.6% and also a growth in university education to 15.1%. The greatest change in the town population's educational structure took place from 2001 to 2011, when there was a great increase in the town population's level of education. In 2001, only 12% of the population had received only a

primary education, 65% had received a secondary education and up to 22.5% of the town's population over 16 a university education. In the case of university education, this is much higher than the regional average (14.6%) and then the Slovak average (16.6%). The town population's potential in terms of education can be evaluated as very good. *(Statistical office of the SR)*

### *Economic activity, employee structure and unemployment*

The economic activity of Nová Dubnica's population is influenced by the size of the economically active population, which reacts to developments in age structure. In 1991, the number of economically active people was around 56% of the population. Over the next period, there was a fall in economically active people to around 50% in 2001, and to 48.1% of the town's population in 2011.

The employee structure of Nová Dubnica's population is influenced by its industrial nature and by the town's links to surrounding industrial centres. In 1991, up to 51% of those economically

Table 25: Employment in the economic sectors – concerning economically active population (1991-2011) (%)

| city/district, region/SR | Nová Dubnica | Ilava district | Trenčín district | Trenčín region | Slovakia |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| agriculture 1991 | **2,53** | 7,54 | 10,3 | 10,86 | **12,62** |
| industry 1991 | **50,92** | 53,98 | 36,22 | 46,22 | **31,78** |
| services 1991 | **74,09** | 50,32 | 39,07 | 44,51 | **33,98** |
| agriculture 2001 | **2,21** | 2,95 | 4,03 | 4,12 | **4,81** |
| industry 2001 | **48,4** | 40,04 | 32,94 | 38,19 | **26,21** |
| services 2001 | **49,41** | 38,17 | 44,98 | 38,99 | **45,93** |
| agriculture 2011 | **2,03** | 3,15 | 4,02 | 5,23 | **4,89** |
| industry 2011 | **42,17** | 43,68 | 31,97 | 39,19 | **30,89** |
| services 2011 | **49,92** | 46,53 | 57,37 | 49,23 | **56,43** |

*Source: Statistical office of SR*

Table 26: Change in unemployment rate (1996-2014) (%)

| city/district, region/SR | Nová Dubnica | Ilava district | Trenčín district | Trenčín region | Slovakia |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1996 | 5,5 | 8,2 | 4,3 | 8,4 | 10,8 |
| 1997 | 5,3 | 7,1 | 4,4 | 8,9 | 11,3 |
| 1998 | 5,8 | 7,4 | 5,5 | 11,2 | 14,7 |
| 1999 | 6,1 | 8,9 | 8,1 | 14,7 | 18,5 |
| 2000 | 4,9 | 7,9 | 7,4 | 13,5 | 17,5 |
| 2001 | 6,2 | 7,7 | 6,8 | 13,0 | 17,5 |
| 2002 | 4,8 | 6,8 | 5,8 | 11,7 | 16,5 |
| 2003 | 5,1 | 6,5 | 5,9 | 10,3 | 15,3 |
| 2004 | 5,0 | 5,7 | 5,5 | 8,8 | 13,0 |
| 2005 | 4,6 | 4,8 | 4,0 | 7,4 | 11,3 |
| 2006 | 3,4 | 3,8 | 2,9 | 5,7 | 9,2 |
| 2007 | 2,9 | 3,2 | 2,7 | 5,0 | 8,1 |
| 2008 | 3,4 | 3,6 | 3,1 | 5,2 | 8,4 |
| 2009 | 7,9 | 9,5 | 7,7 | 10,7 | 12,9 |
| 2010 | 7,1 | 7,5 | 7,9 | 10,2 | 13,0 |
| 2011 | 7,9 | 8,5 | 8,8 | 11,3 | 14,4 |
| 2012 | 10,3 | 10,7 | 10,3 | 12,3 | 15,3 |
| 2013 | 9,7 | 9,8 | 9,4 | 11,8 | 14,4 |
| 2014 | 8,6 | 8,8 | 8,6 | 10,9 | 13,6 |

*Source: Statistical office of SR*

active worked in industry, and 41.7% in the service sector. In 2001, the employee structure evened up even more, with a slight dominance of employment in the service sector, where over 49% of economically active people were employed, and 48% in industry. During the following period, the employee structure focused even

more markedly on the service sectors, and their proportion of the employee structure in 2011 was already 49.9%; employment in industry fell to 42.2%. *(Statistical office of SR)*

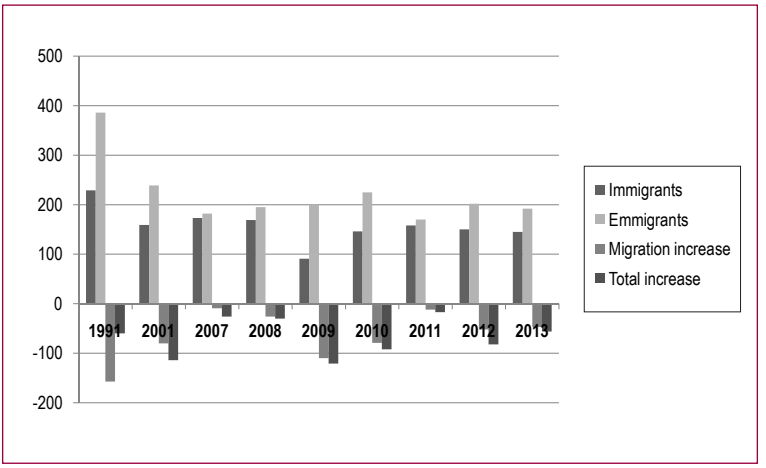
At the beginning of the 1990s, the growth in unemployment was influenced more significantly by the collapse of the mechanical engineering works in Dubnica, where the majority of the town's economically active population worked. The number of unemployed in the town copied the change in the availability of work, mainly in the region. Compared to the surrounding towns and the region, unemployment in Nová Dubnica was markedly lower, and after 2000, it fell to 2.7% in 2007, which did not copy the situation in the region and in Slovakia, but from 2004 it began to have a similar rate to that which characterised the district of Ilava and Trenčín. The beginning of the crisis in 2008 was reflected in Nová Dubnica, too, by a growth in the unemployment rate, which began to fall once more after 2012, when it reached 10.5%. *(Statistical office of the SR)*

### *Residential and work migration*

Nová Dubnica, like the surrounding towns and villages in the Trenčín MR, is characterised by a high level of commuting from home. In 1991, 74.1% of the economically active population commuted to work, of which 66.6% worked in industry. In 2010, commuting affected 54.6% of the economically active population, of which 43.6% worked in industry. *(Statistical office of the SR)* Commuting from town is on the one hand influenced in a positive way by the growth of job opportunities in the town, on the other hand the relatively high level of qualified potential of the economically active population does not correspond to the situation in the town, where mainly companies offering jobs in manual work are established. This means that inhabitants with a higher level of education commute to work in other towns, or move from the town to other places.

Residential migration has a more negative impact than natural increase on the growth in the town's population. From 1996 to 2013, Nová Dubnica has constantly experienced a negative balance of growth from moving; during this entire period, 2,530 people moved to the town, and 3,257 people moved away (a balance of -727 people). No year-on-year increase in population as a result of moving was recorded. The negative balance of migration is

Figure 29: Migration of population in town Nová Dubnica (1991-2013) (people)




*Source: The authors' own edition based on data of Statistical Office of SR*

responsible for more than 67% of the total fall in population during this period (-1,085). *(Statistical office of the SR)* The situation in the majority of surrounding localities is similar. If they do note growth from moving, it is only a small rise.

As far as reasons for moving are concerned, in Nová Dubnica housing is the main reason (around 36%), where the number of people leaving far exceeds the number of people moving in. Further important reasons are following a partner or family member (30%); the number of people who have employment reasons for moving, whether it is due to a change of workplace, to move nearer to work or for medical services, is not as high in this group.

Nová Dubnica has population growth mainly from moving for family reasons, and to a small extent for medical reasons. It loses its inhabitants who move for housing reasons, and to a small extent for work reasons. In Nová Dubnica, this mainly concerns young people who have studied subjects with which they cannot find suitable employment in the town and move away. For some people, however, the quality of life and housing in Nová Dubnica is sufficient motivation to remain in the town, or to return to the town. To a lesser extent this is also the case for the middle-classes for whom the declining physical and social environment of an industrial town is losing attraction and who are looking for housing in nearby towns.

### *Socio-spatial differentiation in the town and its development trends*

The markedly homogenous age and social structure of Nová Dubnica's population is reflected in the town's environment and housing where there was no external manifestation of differing social positions. This changed after 1989, when differing socio-economic situations of families and households began to appear gradually, including in the area of self-presentation, particularly housing and household equipment. Nevertheless, there has been no especially significant socio-spatial differentiation as a result of growing social differentiation between inhabitants in the town, since the opportunities for residential moving are rather reduced, and so the socio-differentiation nature of existing residential areas in the town was reinforced.

This situation was significantly marked by the sale of what used to be company flats (which made up the vast majority of the town's flats) to the town, and their subsequent sale into private ownership. A flat could be bought for relatively little money, which the town's inhabitants took advantage of to a great extent. This stabilised people's living space, and often their children too, in the flats where they moved on arrival in Nová Dubnica. Since there was no real construction of flats from the 1990s, changes in the population's socio-economic status could not be expressed in the area of housing; only some people decided to use the change in their socio-economic status to improve their housing by building a house, mainly in the town area of Kolačín, where there were still opportunities for building new blocks of flats.

The construction in stages of the flats in Nová Dubnica had very interesting socio-spatial consequences which showed up more significantly during the period of transformation. Just as each part of the town differed in its type of construction (the original town in the 1950s, high-rise concrete panel blocks in the 1960s and individual houses in the 1970s), there was practically no social differentiation until the 1990s. Since the 1990s there has been a certain socio-spatial differentiation within the town, and each part of town with its specific type of construction has begun to differ also from the point of view of the socio-economic status of the people living there.

According to the majority of experts, the town is still quite mixed in social terms. Gradually, however, a certain selection is taking place based on socio-economic status. Wealthier people live

mainly in houses in Miklovky, which is seen by experts at present as a millionaires' quarter, even though it was founded during socialism and everyone had the opportunity to build a house here. The companies where people worked even gave them non-repayable loans for construction purposes. At present, social differences are becoming more apparent. Wealthier inhabitants do up their houses and improve them, which is why there are notable differences in the appearance of the houses and their surroundings. There are around 130 empty flats there, making up a reserve of flats for future interested parties. Rich people (but mainly young) are starting to focus on new constructions in Dlhé diely, near the industrial park. Company managers live in Nová Dubnica and in Trenčín; they often prefer Nová Dubnica because it has better housing and living conditions and is cheaper than Trenčín.

Another site favoured by the rich is Kolačín, where there is still land available for further construction. Wealthier groups, mainly businessmen, build villas here, often on greenfield sites on large plots of land in an attractive environment. The richest people live here, and not only those from Nová Dubnica. New houses are planned to be built there, a development which is focused deliberately on rich people, mainly from Trenčín. The population, however, has a relatively negative attitude to this new construction.

In Nová Dubnica's other town quarters, socio-spatial differentiation is not so clear. In the original part of the town, the buildings are old and only rarely repaired. But even this part of town has its supporters who prefer living here to anywhere else. The area with high-rise concrete panel blocks of flat is not very attractive for living. The poorer inhabitants are mainly concentrated in the original part of Nová Dubnica, but it is also partly inhabited by wealthier people who appreciate the large flats and high quality environment. The poorest are pensioners, who mainly live in the old part of town, which they moved to on their arrival in Nová Dubnica. However, there has been no more explicit expression of segregation in the town.

## Conclusions

In conclusion, we can say that Nová Dubnica is a typologically small town with rather limited human, economic and spatial opportunities to adapt to rapid changes. Perspectives for the town's growth are partially determined by the fact that the town has neither the land nor the human resources for any significant growth. It is realistic for the town to maintain its present size. For this, the construction of the industrial park as well as the more efficient use of empty flats and the construction of new flats will be of benefit. This may be of interest for people from regional centre Trenčín, for example, who want to live in a more pleasant environment, and can also have a positive impact on the town's growth.

The town has a wide range of growth opportunities both in its economic base, in the physical and spatial structures of the town's environment as well as in the town's human potential. On the other hand, the town is characterised by a range of problematic situations and phenomena which act as obstacles and have a negative impact on the town's growth.

Both its inhabitants and experts consider Nová Dubnica a pretty town with pleasant living conditions and see the town's best features as: its situation off main roads, the town's natural surroundings, the proximity and accessibility of job opportunities, calm living in an ecologically pleasant environment, a relatively safe environment, the proximity of the regional capital and a well-known spa, the town's interesting architecture, the good transport situation in the town, plenty of greenery and parks, a good level of schooling, waste recycling, the town's focus on electrotechnics, the town's small surface area ("everything is nearby") and its relatively compact size. They agree that the quality of life in the town is rising, and that the town has a good perspective for growth. The well-governed town hall which has the population's confidence is also a factor for its growth.

Inhabitants consider its worst points to be insufficient opportunities for cultural and social events for young people, a lack of sporting activities and no outdoor swimming-pool for the summer. According to the experts, the town's most important problems include the question of housing and stabilising people in the town, the reconstruction of the cinema and outdoor swimming-pool, preserving the town's architecture, facilities for children and

young people's leisure time, a retirement home, the lack of a qualified workforce for the electrical industry, demographic problems related to the population's ageing age structure and the town's fall in population.

In the town, we can identify a certain inclination to reminiscence and nostalgia for the good old days, which originated at the end of the 1990s and could be felt in the majority of towns in Slovakia (part of their double transformation). In Nová Dubnica, however, the situation was specific since the town had only a short history and thus these reminiscences could not entirely negate the town's development during the period of socialism, since the town had not existed at any other time. Memories are usually turned to the period of the town's heyday in the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s which people would like to recreate.

As well as its intentions of assuring the sustainable development of the town with an emphasis on an adequate quality of life, the town also has to solve several conceptual and strategic questions concerning its further development. This mainly concerns the need for cooperation with economic partners in the town, effective forms of cooperation with surrounding towns and villages and the need to respect the limited possibilities for the town's quantitative population growth.

It is clear that the town's growth could be helped by active cooperation between the self-government authority and businesses active in the town. This is the weak point for reflections on development. According to the experts, the activities by local economic players in the town are minimal in terms of their impact on the town's development and region, and they are only expressed practically by the employment of some people from the town. They are not interested in becoming involved in what is happening in the town, or in the town's development. They have no relationship with the town; for them, it is just about the capital they wish to invest in. On the other hand, the town's self-government does not use these contacts yet, even though it respects the opinions of businessmen on the development and situation in the town.

The current nature of cooperation and contacts between the self-government of towns in the micro-region is more or less only on a formal level. In the complicated world of inter-town cooperation, the influence of the political parties represented by the town mayors or people representing the town on the boards of

joint companies is more and more apparent, which has a largely negative impact on the cooperation between municipalities and also supports a certain individualism from towns. Each town tries to solve its problems on its own and plays for its own team, especially when it comes to investors.

Nová Dubnica is an example of the formation of the self-government of towns, and documents the stages which this process involves. At the beginning of the 1990s, there was a stage of learning to self-govern municipalities and defining the basic framework for cooperation between municipalities. Then came the first failures in inter-municipal cooperation, leading to a growth in the individualism of towns and their mutual competitiveness (also conditioned by a growth in differentiation within larger-scale politics) and eventually to the need to look for new forms of cooperation. This mainly concerns small towns and protecting their interests against larger towns, as well as the need to strengthen their specific function vis-à-vis their rural hinterland, of which they are naturally the central points.

Nová Dubnica represents a type of town which needs to count on population "shrinkage" on a longer time scale, and its consequences on the town. The majority of towns in Slovakia are dealing with a fall in population at present, which places individual towns in a position of mutual competition both in the fight for its population and to ensure population growth. Since this is a long-term development trend, it is important for the town to be aware of the potential risk associated with a fall in population and to consider the strategies which might ensure the sustainable development of the town and an adequate quality of life even in this situation. Municipal politics might be declared as complex with a focus on development and quality of life, but the central factor is mainly the town's population growth, which conditions the majority of the town's activities. The town wants to keep and attract young people and young families with affordable prices and new jobs which are being created in the industrial zone. It appears, however, that the town does not have the population resources or the territorial reserves for this growth, or sufficient attraction as a settlement for the migration of young people who are the most prized by the town.

The main player in solving the outlined problems in Nová Dubnica is the town's self-governing authority in deciding which

development strategy it will prioritise and which values it will focus on. The town has no opportunity to look to the past for inspiration or solutions, since it is only 58 years old, during which it lived for 30 years under a regime of state paternalism, so it did not even have time to launch its development before being faced with the necessity of adapting to new circumstances. Developing a contemporary town is based on the objective of making use of the capacities which Nová Dubnica gained during socialism and to place the town today in a new context of attractiveness (greenery, little transport, transparency, sociability, high quality and affordable housing, easy access to the regional centre).

# PART III.

# POSITIONS OF NEW TOWN REGIONS IN THE URBAN NETWORK

# SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

# Social Polarisation Mechanisms in the Hungarian New Town Regions

*Similarities and Differences between the Hungarian New Towns and Large Urban Regions*

Adrienne Csizmady – Zoltán Ferencz

## Introduction

This chapter attempts to provide a picture of the spatial characteristics of Hungarian new towns and their urban areas, and of social polarisation mechanisms, while comparing it to similar aspects of more traditionally developed Hungarian large urban regions. It is well known that new towns organised on (or built for) heavy industry have followed a somewhat different path of development compared to big cities. The question is whether they are still on a different path in East-Central Europe even after the economic changes related to the political transition, or if we can now see tendencies that are similar to those in other big cities.

This chapter is based on the results of a previous study, showing how the social and spatial structure of large urban areas had transformed between 2005 and 2014, and how the relationship had changed between centre and periphery *(Szirmai–Ferencz, 2015)*. From these studies it became apparent that the scrutinised big cities and their urban areas do fit into European trends; among others by the fact that spatial social differences have increased here as well.

The study has been realised within the confines of the research entitled "Social Polarisation in the Hungarian and Eastern-Central European 'New Town' Regions: Impacts of Transition and Globalisation" (K 106169), funded by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office.

Based on these results, this chapter will examine how these trends are visible in new towns, and which features are those that show most characteristically the similarities and differences between the societies of new towns and big cities.

The study's empirical background is provided by the results of a survey conducted in 2015 on 11 Hungarian new towns and their regions, and the results of another survey conducted in 2005 and 2014 on nine large urban areas (each having more than 100,000 inhabitants).[1, 2]

## New town societies versus the societies of large urban regions

### *General features of new town societies*

The population needs of new towns were significant in the socialist period due to forced industrialisation. As a result, almost all residents were new to the towns. The childless and working-age population that recently moved to new towns also tended to have their children born there, which ensured the next generation of inhabitants and workers for the town. The situation of new towns changed radically after the new millennium when secure job opportunities vanished. As a result, an increasing amount of peo-

[1] The latest study (1) was commissioned by the HAS Centre for Social Sciences and funded by the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund (OTKA). Registration number: K 106169. The study was conducted through a questionnaire-based survey of a 2275-person sample which was representative in terms of age, gender, educational attainment and settlement structure in the 11 new towns and their suburban settlements. The categories used in creating the sample (e.g. urban zones, suburban settlement types) were the same as the ones in previous studies (2) (3). The survey was conducted between 25 November 2014 and 29 January 2015.

Surveys in the large urban regions studies (2) (3) were conducted based on a 5,000-person sample representative in terms of age, gender, educational attainment and settlement structure. The studies included Budapest, Debrecen, Szeged, Miskolc, Pécs, Győr, Nyíregyháza, Kecskemét, Székesfehérvár, and their urban regions. (3) The 2014 study "Social Conflicts – Social Well-Being and Security – Competitiveness and Social Development" is the outcome of the EU's SROP 4.2.2.A-11/1 / KONV 2012-0069 research project. The survey has been implemented by the sub-programme of Kodolányi János University of Applied Sciences; the data recording was conducted by TÁRKI Social Research Institute Inc. between 9 January 2014 and March 17, 2014.

Table 27: Changes in the number of residents (2001-2014; 2010-2014) (100%=population in the first year)

| | Between 2001 and 2014 | | Between 2010 and 2014 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Name of town and town region | Inner city | Suburban settlements | Inner city | Suburban settlements |
| Dunaújváros | 86.0% | 100.0% | 95.7% | 98.0% |
| Komló | 86.0% | 87.0% | 93.3% | 96.1% |
| Kazincbarcika | 83.5% | 89.6% | 95.1% | 97.5% |
| Ózd | 85.6% | 87.8% | 97.4% | 101.6% |
| Tatabánya | 92.4% | 101.3% | 95.2% | 97.7% |
| Ajka | 89.1% | 93.5% | 97.8% | 98.7% |
| Paks | 92.1% | 92.8% | 98.4% | 99.4% |
| Oroszlány | 88.2% | 94.4% | 97.0% | 96.6% |
| Százhalombatta | 109.8% | 116.5% | 100.0% | 99.0% |
| Várpalota | 91.9% | 94.6% | 97.2% | 97.8% |
| Tiszaújváros | 92.0% | 94.8% | 97.9% | 96.8% |
| 11 towns total | 89.6% | 94.8% | 98.9% | 98.6% |

*Source: CSO data*

ple moved away from the town while the influx of new residents remained minimal. With the local industry's structural transformation after the millennium, emigration started to slow down, reaching a significantly low level in the 2010-2014 period. While in Europe the population of urban areas generally increases as the population of cities decreases, we see a somewhat different picture in new towns, where both their population and the population of their urban areas have decreased – although this tendency has somewhat slowed down in recent years.

Behind the transformation there is a process which in new towns can also be identified: there is a continuous flow from rural settle-

[2] The demographic trends from the questionnaire-based research on new towns are consistent with the trends readable from the data published by the CSO and with the information communicated by other publications as well *(Csizmady, 2016)*. They are complemented in this study with data not belonging to the data collection profile of CSO.

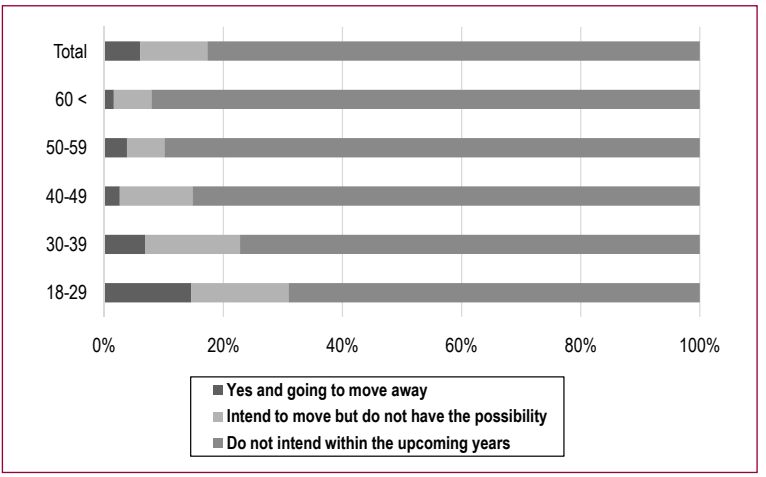
ments to cities and their urban agglomeration and from the city's core areas to the suburbs and the town region's settlements[3]. One-sixth of the respondents living in new towns moved before 1990 to the settlement where they live now and two-thirds have been living in their place of residence since their birth. The same proportion is only one-eighth in the surrounding villages. After 1990 this trend reversed. In the first decade of the millennium undeveloped suburban settlements had the highest percentage of immigrants; however, since 2000 advanced and underdeveloped suburban settlements alike. Nevertheless, at this time the proportion of immigrants to cities was only ten per cent.

Among the reasons behind the preference of town region settlements it is a major argument that the younger, more mobile social strata prefer living in town region settlements with more favourable (and often cheaper) physical environment for starting their family instead of living in new town housing estates or expensive detached houses in the outskirt zones. As a result, a significant demographic difference can be seen between towns and their regions: while in new towns the proportion of population aged 60 and older is over 26.5%, it is only 18% in town regions. Town leader officials, town planners can also see this and they know how much pulling force physical environment has. Accordingly they try to attract educated people with deliberate policy and keep away low social status layers *(Csizmady–Csanádi, 2014)*. The physical environment is therefore a repulsive force for cities, but in the case of surrounding villages it appears as a pulling force and plays a significant role as a catalyst for immigration and outmigration.

It is no wonder that the intention to move away is high also among the young generations and it is the highest especially the among the youngest ones (16.3%), but they – as well as the active generation of 30-39 years olds (15.9%) – are those who are increasingly faced with the fact that this is not truly a realistic possibility. This is because beyond the low level of education, unemployment, low social status, or financially not strong enough families, parents unable to ensure their kid's 'start-up', and low real estate prices all make this form of spatial mobility hard or even impossible for many people.

[3] Unfortunately, no survey data are available on internal migrations therefore we can use only residential immigration data for demonstrating this trend.

Figure 30: Intention to change residence in the next few years in the Hungarian new town regions (2015)




*Source: The authors' own edition based on the data of the questionnaire-based survey*

The data also indicate that among the older than 40 years the proportion of those not intending to move is very high. It is no wonder that among those intending to move the proportion of active wage earners is the highest; however, among those having no opportunities to move the proportion of the unemployed and low income groups is significant as well.

This is a significant obstacle to moving away in new towns and their region because the unemployment rate since the regime change has been very high here. Half of the respondents indicated that since they started working, for some time, at least once have already been unemployed. Although the situation between 2005 and 2007 began to improve, but the improving trend was broken by the 2008 crisis, and since then unemployment has been rising[4]. Many people travel daily or commute for a better job and work-place: one-third of those living in new town regions travel to work in a different settlement from where they live. Moving farther from the centre of new towns the higher is the percentage of people working elsewhere (not in their home town): among the active wage earners living in the inner city this rate is 17% while among those living in the outskirts it is about 24% and in the suburbs it is

[4] For more details see Csizmady, 2016

about 60%. In other words, nearly two-thirds of people living in suburban zones do not work locally, but often in the town the region of which the settlement belongs to. The town region is actually operating as a unit whose core provides the production-service-type jobs and its outer edges the residential areas, where the majority of residents commute from. There is a very small difference between the rate of commuters living in advanced (50.0%) and underdeveloped (58.0%) town regions.

The frequent shorter or longer period of unemployment leaves its mark on the general welfare level and contributes to the significant polarisation of society. In the new town regions only 5 percent of families live without troubles and can even save up money beyond the daily expenditures; and there are detectable regional differences in this, i.e. affluent families live in a less segregated manner.

One third of the sample just gets by on their income by economising but the relative majority can hardly make ends meet from their monthly income. The proportion of this category is higher in the surrounding settlements (and including the undeveloped suburban zones) is higher. Among them the proportion of people having serious financial problems is one-seventh and of people living in destitute is 2.3 percent.

### *General characteristics of the societies of large urban regions*

Analysing the society of big cities and their large urban areas the general European trends are seen. Under socialism, the population was growing strongly for some time after the regime change it began to decline everywhere. The decline on the one hand, resulted from natural deaths, which could not be compensated by the falling population growth. On the other hand, it was a consequence of the outmigration, which over the last 15 years has exceeded immigration. Although the population of cities – by now even if not strongly but still decreases – while the population of large urban areas is growing.

The inflow is indicated by relocation data as well: About one-third of the respondents living in large urban regions are immigrants so they do not live in their town since birth. Of them 14.7% came during the socialist period, in the nineties the intensity of settlings in reduced, and only 5.1% of the people living here came at that time. After 2000, with the economic recovery, however, more people came again (12%).

The reasons for this are suburbanisation processes and the influx from rural areas into the family house settlements of large urban regions which will change the social status of these areas. The ingoing higher education graduates aspire to live in municipalities and residential districts with better physical environment.

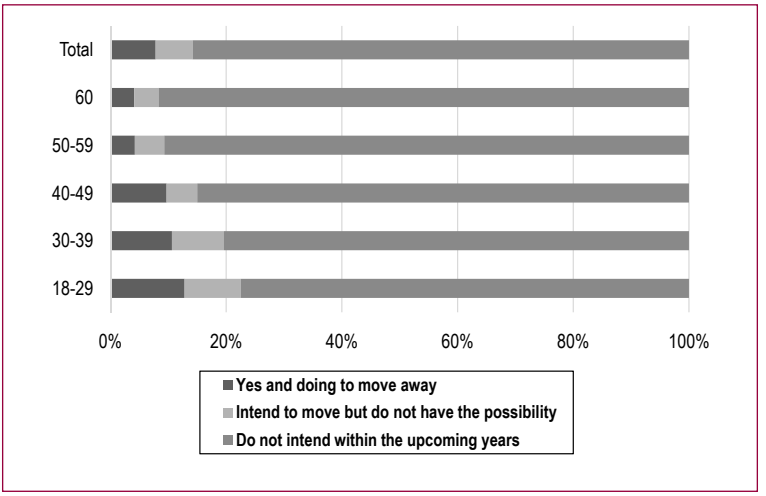
The number of higher education graduates is increasing: their ratio between 2005 and 2014 increased from 14.8% to 25.9% but the ratio of people not having a certificate of secondary education remained unchanged. Naturally it is the general increase in the level of education, the strengthening of the position of big cities and their increasing ability to absorb qualified labour capacity that are standing in the background of this trend.

The population retaining power of settlements corresponds to the national average. 14.2% of the people living here intend to move further at some time in the future. The younger the age group, the more likely it wants to go away: while 22.5% of 18-29 year olds, only 9.3% of the 50-59 year olds intend to do this. However, there is a significant gap between desires and their feasibility; this appears most clearly in the generation between the ages of 18-39, as nearly one-tenth is the proportion of those who would move away, but have no opportunities for this now and in the near future.

The greatest barriers to moving away are unemployment and low income. Among those who do not have the opportunity to move away 56.3% indicated that they had been unemployed at some time during their active wage earner life. Experiencing unemployment is characteristic for one-third of the sample. Currently more than half of our sample is still employed. 80% of the people living in large urban regions work on their place of residence. One fifth is the proportion of those who go to work elsewhere. Of the active ones living in city centres only one-tenth, of those living in advanced suburban zones 40% and of the inhabitants of underdeveloped suburban zones 65% "go out to work".

The progress of social polarisation has already been analysed by Szirmai (2015) and her colleagues in their previous research. According to this, on the one hand in the major cities the centre-periphery model has been revealed and on the other hand, in parallel with this, the dichotomy of the recently formed low-status centre and the increasing status periphery where people from the city centre moved towards lower status peripheral settlements,

Figure 31: Intention to change residence in the next few years in the urban regions of the nine Hungarian major cities (2014)




*Source: The authors' own edition based on the data of the questionnaire-based survey*

due to the inflow of high status groups and at the same time to the exclusion of lower status groups.

This has been verified by the survey's subjective social status measuring indicator as well. The farther we move from the central part of the city the higher is the proportion of people living in good conditions. In the inner cities compared to the regional average, half (3.2%), in outskirts compared to the inner city areas 2.8 times more people (8.9%) evaluate their social position as good. More than two-fifths of the large urban region's population just gets by on their income by economising (44.9%). Their proportion is high in inner cities (51.3%), in outskirts zones (49.8%) and underdeveloped suburban zones (49.7%). Nearly one-third of the population of big cities (31%) can hardly make ends meet from their monthly income. Their proportion is extremely high in inner-city areas and in advanced suburban settlements. Like in the new towns one seventh of the population is struggling with financial problems from month to month. Such households are found in the least proportion in inner city areas and mainly in transitional zones. The ratio of destitute people, however, is the highest in the city centre (5.5%).

## *The social characteristics of the two regions*

In this section the major tendencies, similarities and differences appear as a list. One of the most important problems of the recent years is the decline in urban population. After the change of the regime this process was much faster in the new towns than in big cities. In the new town regions the rate of decline in a given year was significantly influenced by the transformation of industrial production: the closure of factories, plants, the emergence of new owners, the launch of production, they are all factors that can either give a boost to the exodus, or give hope and are more likely to retain working-age population in the towns. Big cities in the same period recorded a much smaller population decline, and the decline soon turned rather into stagnation.

The negative changes in the composition of society by age, the ageing of population present a significant problem on European level. This trend is seen in both town types. However, new towns really faced this problem only after the millennium. The age structure was much better than the national average of big cities as a result of labour force settling in from the fifties. However, this favourable situation has quickly annulated due to the outmigration of population, not independent from economic changes, and now considering age composition, there is hardly any difference between the two town types.

The unemployment rate has always been higher in new towns since the regime change. Apart from a few years after the millennium, the difference was always increasing. In the big cities it was much easier to find suitable work locally. There is a significant difference in commuting between the people living in new town regions and large urban regions. To find a suitable job locally in new towns – mainly because of the lower presence of service industry – is more difficult. This is reflected in the commuting habits: while one-third of people living in the new town regions, are forced to travel for work to another settlement, out of those living in large urban regions, only one in five. Two-thirds of the economically active population of new towns and their regions work at the same place where they live, and nearly one-third travels for work to another settlement. Compared to big cities the ratio of commuters is much higher in new towns, due perhaps to the fact that the available jobs in new towns were concentrated in

the inner parts of town not in the surroundings, and after the degradation of industry new businesses settled rather in an existing, but often empty building infrastructure and developed their sites there, and not on one of the settlements of the new town region. But if they did so, they preferred more developed settlements – or the settlements became more developed thanks to these incoming workplaces. In this regard there are no significant differences between the new town regions' developed and underdeveloped settlements, but there is a significant (20%) difference between those of large urban regions.

Social polarisation is significant, if we look at the families' own admission of how well they live on their salaries in new town regions: the occurrence of social strata that live without problems, or beyond daily spending has even been able to save up is very low and spatially not segregated, but the occurrence of families living amongst troubles, or hardly make ends meet from their monthly income is quite widespread.

People being in the worst situation can find affordable housing in the less developed regions, only, where there are fewer job opportunities, so for them even commuting can be a serious logistical and financial problem.

The proportion of families living without problems (6.8%) is slightly higher in large urban regions than in the new town regions (5%). While the spatial polarisation along this subjective indicator in new towns is not really noticeable, in surrounding settlements it is the less developed ones where the ratio of those living month-by-month with financial problems and of the destitute is higher.

However, the gap between the physical-spatial-social 'upward slope' and centre-periphery and between the advanced and underdeveloped urban areas ranging from the city centre to the suburban zone is clearly visible in the case of large cities.

The population retaining power of new towns and their regions is slightly smaller than that of large urban regions: in the previous area the ratio of people wishing to move is 7.3% while in the latter one it is 14.2%. The opportunities in case of both town region types are limited; in case of the inhabitants of new towns and their regions more significantly (11.3% indicated that they would like to move, but there's no way for them) and to a smaller degree for the inhabitants of bigger cities (6.5%). In both of these areas it is more difficult for those living in underdeveloped urban peripheries to

move, except in towns around the capital city, where it is more difficult to move to more advanced settlements. The reason behind this may be that families moving here undertook too much financial burden, and they do not see an opportunity to move further for living in a better and not worse physical environment.

It is generally known that young families are more mobile, but the number of those being unable to move further is the highest just among them. Even in this respect there is a significant difference between the two studied areas: while this problem affects one-tenth of 18-29 year olds and 30-39 year olds living in large cities and their urban regions, 1.7-1.8 times higher proportion of people living in new towns and their regions in the same age group face the same problem. There is a ten per cent difference even between those who have ever experienced unemployment: while in large urban regions the ratio of people unable to move is 56.3%, it is 68.5% in new town regions.

While in Western Europe in case of big cities this rearrangement is often dominated by spontaneous processes, in new towns urban planning instruments that facilitate the ignition of this process are becoming increasingly important (see Szirmai's introductory study). In contrast to Hungarian big cities, in new towns this trend works only partially as since the regime change the population both in towns and their surrounding settlements has mostly reduced: in the former category to a greater, in the latter one to a much less extent. Although in new towns the number of urban population declined after the turn of the millennium, but the decrease became less intense in the last 5 years. In the case of urban areas the decrease was so little that it can be interpreted as stagnation.

## Characteristics of the spatial-social structure

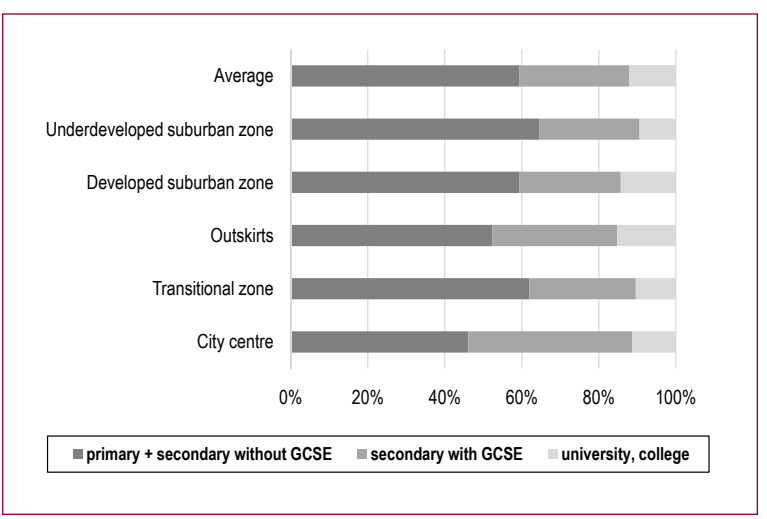
### *The spatial-social structure of the new town regions*

In new towns in recent years the fourth stage of urbanisation, the re-concentration has been visibly formulating *(Enyedi, 2012),* while social polarisation becomes more and more powerful *(Szirmai, 2016)*. Segregation and the consolidation of the tendencies in this direction generate more and more pronounced patterns of spatial segregation. Unlike in Western Europe, starting

outward from the city centre, the proportion of graduates shows a fluctuating pattern. In the transition zone it is similar to that of the city centre and in the outskirts and advanced suburbs it is slightly higher, while in the underdeveloped urban peripheries it is a little lower than in the city centre. Some of the city's central areas that are valuated higher as a result of gentrification provide residential place for higher status groups similarly to the Western European trends. Other parts preserve their micro segregated areas of low status groups. Similar processes are witnessed in the urban neighbourhood zones: in better physical conditioned suburbs the higher status social strata while in worse suburbs the lower status population is concentrated. As a result of suburbanisation the trend, formed after the change of regime and reinforced later by town planning tools, structured the population in the urban neighbourhoods by a pattern similar to the inner part of the city. The peri-urban settlements are also not of the same type: some of them have become popular residential areas for high status groups. The municipalities are divided into two parts: advanced and underdeveloped settlements.

The spatial differences appear in the realisation possibilities of moving intentions as well. The definite move away intentions in

Figure 32: The distribution of population by educational attainment groups in the different zones of new town regions (2015)




*Source: The authors' own edition based on the data of the questionnaire-based survey*

intra-urban territories are typical for low status, village-type areas with less good physical characteristics. The conditional intention (would move away if had the opportunity) has rather been manifested by the inhabitants of high-status residential areas. This is because in such housing estates like that the next step higher on the housing slope is the gated community flat which is either very rare or not one but two degrees more expensive than people living here could afford. The high status suburban areas with good physical parameters are the most popular ones and accordingly, the moving away intentions are the lowest here.

The situation is similar in suburban zones. The physical environment, the quality and quantity of services around a residential home may be serious attractive or repulsive factors. Therefore, no wonder if moving away intentions are higher in underdeveloped settlements. But it is coupled with the fact that people living here feel most often the lack of feasibility of moving away from here. Behind this in most cases low social status, the lack of income security can be found because these areas are populated by unskilled workers and agricultural unqualified blue-collar workers and those who have never worked in much higher than average proportion.

The survey provides an opportunity to explore a number of factors: on the one hand, which social group lives in the highest proportion in the respective areas, and secondly, the spatial differences through the situation of a particular social group.

In the inner cities[5] – which in a significant number of new towns are predominantly the areas of panel housing estates – the ratio of people with secondary education and within this GCSE graduates stands out. The level of education already predestines the available job positions: the area is inhabited by managers and white-collar workers with mostly an average (151-200 thousand HUF per month) income.

The general trends of European cities are relevant for the people living here; this means a lower ratio of married and a higher ratio of unmarried people and accordingly childless households. So here can be found the better positioned young generation house-

[5] In our research on inner cities they mean the internal parts of cities where most of the servicing functions are available.

holds, wishing to lead a more urban type lifestyle, whose parents live in a family house on the outskirts of the city or in more developed urban peripheries. At the same time almost every town has an inner city part which is a segregation risk zone or derelict, with extremely high ratio of manual workers and unemployment and the ratio of families is also the highest here.

The panel flats of the transitional zone[6] are mostly inhabited by people with secondary educational attainment without GCSE, and in a large proportion by skilled workers who are often employed as physical workers in "precarious" jobs. This is indicated by the fact that every second of them has already been unemployed. The big international plants and the domestic small factories, enterprises replacing the former heavy industry will provide stable and often higher than the Hungarian average income as long as they can remain on the market. Because of the intense competition they often go bankrupt and then several hundred employees may get into an unstable situation at the same time.

Among the people living here there is a high proportion of those receiving by one category higher salary than inner city inhabitants (200-300 thousand HUF/month). But this is not enough to constitute a significant saving for the family, so due to the recurring unemployment, the emergence of people, living in month-by-month financial difficulties unable to pay even their monthly bills, is quite a common phenomenon.

People living in better flats in traditionally built in areas are slightly better off, they mostly work as senior employees.

The proportion of those who were born here is above-average, and even of their children who from other cities, or even from other parts of the country moved to the town's housing estates built in connection with the forced industrialisation. The parents' generation is getting older together with the flats; the proportion of people aged 60 or over is extremely high and even of women within this category. This is the reason for the high proportion of single-person households as well.

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[6] A substantial part of the transitional zones consist of housing estates but also here can be found traditional urban residential areas and some poorer parts in a dispersed spatial pattern.

The panel flats that were desirable in the socialist era for some time due to the absence of the high level of comfort and housing shortages lost their attractiveness after the regime change and by the period between 1990 and 1999 they had become the least desirable areas of new towns for home seekers. Thus, it is no wonder either, that among people living there the wish to move away is very strong and the proportion of those who would be happy to move away but have no opportunities is also high.

The outskirts areas are architecturally very heterogeneous, as they include garden city, rural type family housing areas, gated communities and recreation areas as well. No wonder, therefore, that ageing households, middle-aged families; married and divorced people are all present in the area. Accordingly, it is difficult to define a typical inhabitant, but not impossible: mostly secondary school graduates with GCSE and higher education graduates prefer these areas who have stable jobs, are often self-employed or work as employed intellectuals in the private sector in high proportion. Among them, there are also those who have jobs in other municipalities, so they commute. The stable, good jobs are coupled with high family-level income (300 thousand HUF or more per month) so here lives the highest proportion of people who have no problem to pay their bills. This provides a solid basis to a significant proportion of families who dare to take out loans and be able to pay the instalments without difficulty. It is secondary school graduates with GCSE who live in the highest proportion in high status suburban zones, while higher education graduates live in gated communities, skilled workers live in rural type, family housing neighbourhoods in the highest proportion.

The settlements of the suburban zone of new towns can also be divided into two distinctive parts. The developed suburban zones are preferred by the middle-class; entrepreneurs, civil servants, live here in high proportion. Young married couples starting their family life, planning to live with their children often move out of the city centre to live here and couples with more children than the average also live here in the highest proportion.

The ratio of those with financial problems, with problems of paying their bills is low. Apartments / houses purchased with loans the repayment of which for most families does not cause particular problems are very common here. However, there are some areas where inhabitants sometimes have difficulties in repaying their loans.

The typical inhabitants of underdeveloped suburban settlements are unmarried physical employees or entrepreneurs. Many of these people have troubles with paying their bills, the proportion of those struggling with month to month financial difficulties and destitute is high.

## *The spatial-social structure of large urban regions*

Previous researches on big cities and their large urban regions *(Szirmai, 2007)* in 2005 verified the emergence of the classic centre-periphery model (moving from the centre outward the social status of inhabitants is declining and the settlements of the urban area can sharply be distinguished into advanced and underdeveloped categories). However, the research conducted in 2014 slightly changed this picture. The differences between the urban zones appeared to be diminishing, which was explained by *Viktória Szirmai (2015)* as a result of an inner suburbanisation process (the higher status groups often moved toward suburban garden area zones instead of moving out of town). Thus, the process of moving out of city slowed down, as people started moving in or moving back from the surrounding villages. This can be interpreted as a sign of population concentration processes when newcomers to the city are attracted by better job opportunities and facilities and the lack of the same factors and the extension of well-being deficit areas push away the inhabitants from regional settlements. *(Szirmai–Ferencz, 2015)*

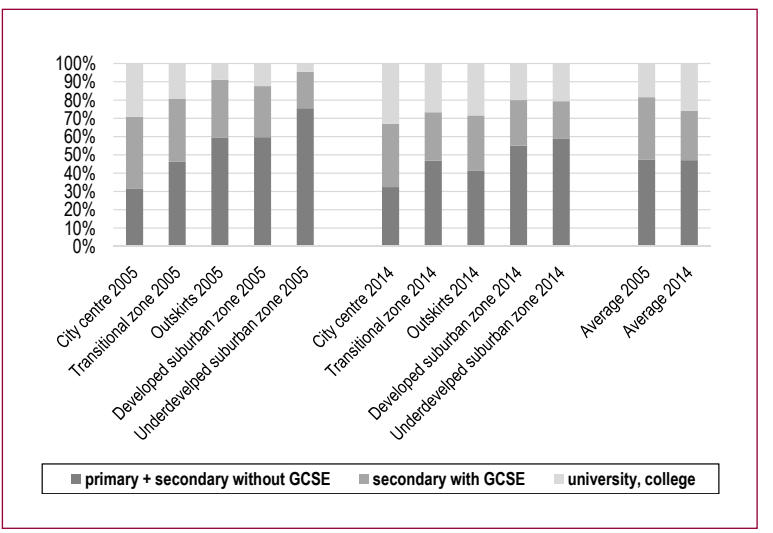
The empirical data by educational attainment make this change well-traceable. While in each zone – due to the increase in the general level of education – the proportion of university graduates slightly increased, the internal structures have slightly been rearranged: the city centre still stands, however, the suburban area caught up with the transitional zone. The proportion of university graduates has not changed significantly in city centres. The small increase shown by the data can be attributed to the rise of general educational level between 2005 and 2014. The change in the transitional zones, however, is even more than that, as the proportion of university graduates has increased to 1.4-fold. It was an even greater change in the suburban zone. However, this has rather been the consequence of urban sprawl than of gentrification resulting from urban rehabilitation. The "beneficiaries" of family

house and condominium constructions generated by the real estate market boom were the higher-status families who bought a home for themselves preferably in this zone. As a result of this, the proportion of university graduates has tripled. Thus, the suburban zones have polarised and while there was a high demand for good positioned, often newly parcelled parts, the properties being in less good physical condition, and more difficult to access were avoided by university graduates.

The differences in suburban settlements registered in 2005 also seem to be slightly decreasing. The differences in educational attainment and income between advanced and underdeveloped suburban zones seem to dissolve. Maybe it is not independent from the fact that university graduates could not find cheap plots with physical characteristics suitable to their needs elsewhere. The developed suburban zones have been sold out, the only direction led to town regions' underdeveloped but well accessible settlements.

It is not only the processes induced by the spontaneously booming real estate market resulting from economic recovery that may stand behind all these changes but also those catalysed by town planning. The urban regeneration projects co-funded by the EU –

Figure 33: The distribution of population by educational attainment groups in the different zones of the urban regions of nine major cities (2005; 2014 )




*Source: NRDP and SROP research*

which took place not only in the inner cities but also in the transitional zones and in the suburbs – almost everywhere ignited the gentrification processes which were halted only by the 2008 global economic crisis.

In order that the structure of new towns and their region could more easily be compared to the big cities, the same categorisation as in the previous section should be done, i.e. to find out the characteristic types of different zones.

The typical inner city dweller, on the one hand is a man/woman with higher educational qualifications, being at the top of his/her career, 50-59 years old; on the other hand he/she is young, being at the beginning of his/her career, often coming from the countryside, graduated from a secondary school and currently studying at an institute of higher education. Due to the age characteristics of the two groups the number of children is small in the zone; the proportion of two-person households is outstanding. Every inner city has a part which is of lower status, mainly white-collar employees live here. The proportion of those living in destitute or from month-to-month just making ends meet from their monthly salary is high. The mobility here is lower than average.

The transitional zone is very heterogeneous, not only in terms of its architectural character, but also of its inhabitants. Therefore, it is very difficult to find its typical inhabitant. The research samples do not make the further division of the zone into sub-sections possible, but it is still worth checking who live here. No wonder that we can find here – presumably around the former industrial zones – people living from month-to-month being in financial troubles, those who have already been more than 3 times unemployed for a longer period. The number of broken families living in one-person households, divorced or widowed is high. They are the ones who, due to the absence of necessary financial resources, are able to move away only by external (governmental) support.

It is the outskirts with better physical properties (as it has previously been described) that were steadily invaded by the higher status population in recent years. This does not necessarily mean people of the highest level of educational attainment (in addition to university graduates the ratio of vocational high school graduates rate is also high) but rather those who live in good financial conditions. Here the ratio of residents with higher than the

300,000 HUF per month family income living without financial problems in marriage and the proportion of people living in households with three people is very high. However, the fact that the number of people intending to move away from here is the highest here and they have the greatest opportunity for doing so, signals changes in the migratory trends.

The population of advanced suburban settlements has soared recently due to the growing number of immigrants from the countryside or from the central settlements. They are the ones who justified their choice by better air quality or by the interests of their children. That is also a reason why families of 4 members live here in a high percentage. However, it also appears that it is not the most highly qualified (there are both leaders and blue collar employees here) and not the high-income social groups are in majority here. The typical household type has lower than 200,000 HUF per month disposable household income. In certain areas the proportion of primary education graduates and of inactive people who can hardly make ends meet from their monthly income is high. They are the ones who live in less-favourable physical conditioned, suburban slum areas.

People with low level of educational attainment live in the highest proportions among the inhabitants of underdeveloped suburban zones. And typically they are in the age group of 40-59 and on average they have already been two times unemployed. It is typically manual workers and entrepreneurs who nonetheless get along well on their incomes. The average family size is very big consisting of five members or more.

## Comparison of the spatial-social structures

The research data from 2005 showed that the centre-periphery model prevails, according to its classical criteria for major cities and their large urban regions. Higher social status groups chose the central areas of cities in higher proportion as their dwelling place (with the exception of run-down downtowns) against city outskirts and urban area settlements.

The research conducted in 2014 found a slightly different situation to the extent that the social structure of urban districts seemed to be more balanced. The gradient of high status in urban

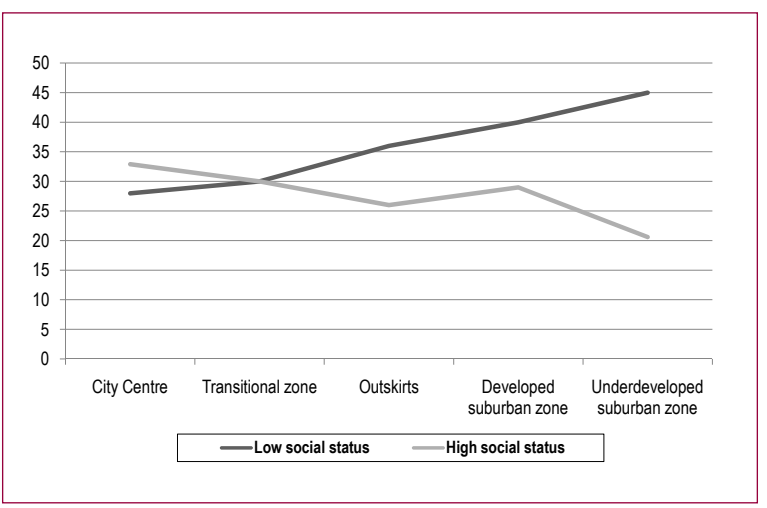
peripheries was only true for certain localities. The proportion of higher educational graduates has increased in the area's other municipalities.

This indicated that the city's suburban settlements have been differentiated. The higher social status groups have emerged in underdeveloped suburban settlements as well and with this the overall status of the town region has also increased, while of the centres slightly decreased. This change is clearly shown by the figure prepared on the basis of large urban region research data: in the structure of the large urban region starting from the city centre progressing towards the large urban region's settlements for a while the proportion of high status groups decreased in a linear way; then this decrease was broken in advanced large urban region settlements, while the rate of low-status groups increased linearly.

Behind this are the gentrification processes which were catalysed by the real estate boom between 2004 and 2008 and by the EU subsidisation of urban regeneration processes launched in the early 2000s which were typical not only in big cities but also in some smaller surrounding settlements.

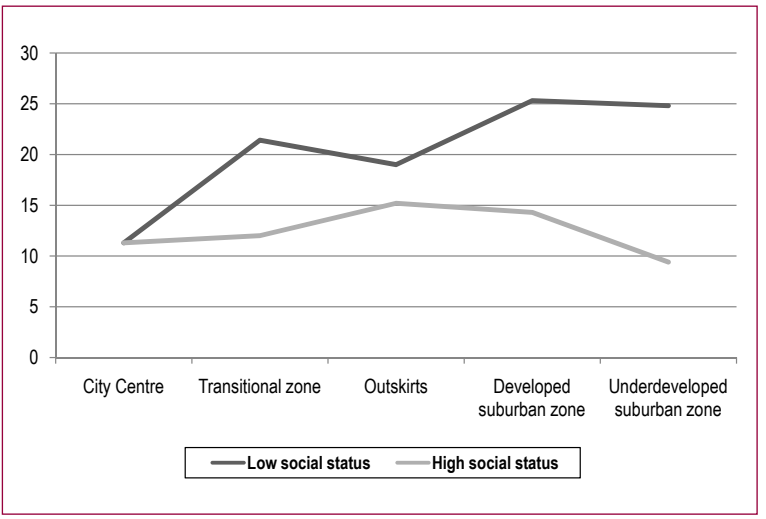
This model in the context of new towns and their regions seems to work a bit differently. In the case of urban areas social status

Figure 34: Change of social status in the different structural zones of the nine Hungarian major cities and their urban areas (2014) (%)




*Source: The author's own edition on the basis of Szirmai-Ferenc, 2014*

Figure 35: Change of social status in the different structural zones of the Hungarian new town regions (2015) (%)




*Source: The authors' own edition based on the representative survey conducted in 2015*

increases (a little) going outward from the centre – so this is a reverse trend. The suburb seems to be most in transition, as compared to other zones as the proportion of both the low and the high status groups "pops out from the trend": the low status rate is much lower, the high status rate is a little higher. There is no significant difference in the rates between the city centre and the transition zone, which is due to the fact that the two zones are of very similar architectural character. However, the trends in the settlements of new town regions are similar to that of large urban regions: in developed settlements the social status of inhabitants is also higher (approx. the same as of those living in the suburbs). However, in underdeveloped settlements the high-status indicator line drops to the level seen in the transitional zone. Therefore, in case of new town regions the greater proportion presence of higher status groups[7] is not visible in less developed settlements.

[7] However, it is not known whether this proportion of high status groups is static or has dynamically changed in recent years. This means whether the ratio of low-status groups at a smaller scale, but also began to grow as seen in large urban regions. This could be indicated by another study by measuring the change.

The difference between the two types of urban areas – as shown by the above figures – is well illustrated for example by the proportion of entrepreneurs. They live in high proportions in the central parts of big cities, in transitional zones and less developed suburban settlements; in the case of new towns in more advanced suburbs and peri-urban settlements.

The differences of the inner zones between the two types of urban areas could be best illustrated perhaps with the following details: the inner parts of new towns – where the presence of panel technology is conspicuous – cannot compete with the historical style centres of big cities (even if both are refurbished). Accordingly, the ratio of higher educational graduates in the central parts of big cities is three times, in the transitional zones 2.5 times, in the outskirts 1.8 times higher than in the respective zones of new towns. In new town regions the proportion of those having no GCSE is higher; however, the proportion of higher education graduates is half of those living in large urban regions. Between the advanced suburban areas the difference is minimal: 1.4 fold and it is 2.2 fold between the underdeveloped ones.

Examining the internal spatial and social structure of new towns through educational attainment groups, patterns significantly different from large cities can be seen. While there are no differences between the inner city area and the transitional zone of new towns in the proportion of higher educational graduates, in big cities the difference is 1.2 fold. In contrast, the proportion of higher educational graduates is 1.5 times higher in the new towns' suburban areas, while the difference is not so significant in large cities. The same is true for advanced and underdeveloped suburban zones; in the advanced suburban zones of new town regions the proportion of higher educational graduates is 1.5 times higher than in underdeveloped ones but in the case of big cities no difference is found between the two zone types.

Comparing the two urban area types by their typical inhabitants also significant differences can be detected.

The inner city population of big cities and new towns are markedly different. While on much of the above areas (except the slum areas) the characteristics of population is similar to those living in Western Europe – i.e. highly skilled, well paid, middle-aged households, facing childbirth or young people engaged in tertiary studies often coming from the countryside as tenants – in new

towns rather secondary school graduates, average income staff leaders or intellectual staff members are the typical inhabitants. Both places have citizens living in run-down districts which have not yet been affected by urban regeneration. Their income is generally low and they have been unemployed several times as well.

The transitional zone is architecturally very heterogeneous, so it is difficult to define a distinct group. In new towns, the architectural style attracts different social groups. The typical inhabitants of panel house districts are skilled manual workers. They are the ones who may be less stable because of the nature of their low qualifications and work and because they may often be bound to foreign-owned and also due to the domestic legal regulations unstable entrepreneurs, but as long as they have a job it provides good income for them. The traditionally built-in areas are inhabited by the ageing indigenous population and the higher status groups having settled in after the regime change. In big cities those living in run-down neighbourhoods, or in worse conditioned housing estates form a well identifiable characteristic group. They are the ones who are struggling with financial problems, and only external support can improve their situation. Our data seem to indicate that the other areas of the zone rather have a heterogeneous population, which is also a good indicator of the zone's changes between 2005 and 2014. It is still in transition but probably after 10 years from now the typical inhabitant can easily be found.

The outskirts are architecturally similar to the transitional zone and may be very heterogeneous. Recently both in new towns and in big cities even if not the entire zone's but some of its areas' status has slightly increased. Therefore, among the new towns' population worse positioned aging households, home life starter, rising middle-aged families; married couples and divorced individuals are emerging at the same time. In big cities households with children, higher educational graduates and well-paid skilled workers are the typical inhabitants.

In advanced suburban zones the difference between the two town types is already more significant. While in large urban regions moderately high-income employees, often manual workers are the most typical inhabitants, in new town regions mostly high-income entrepreneurs and civil servants live in high proportion. However, a higher than average proportion of families with more children is characteristic for this zone in both town types.

The underdeveloped suburban settlements of both town types serve as residential places for lower status groups who are threatened by unemployment, they are manual workers, and more than once have experienced the out of salary problems at the end of the month.

## Conclusions

At the beginning of the 21st century the most pressing problem of big cities and their urban regions as well as of new towns and their region is to maintain their population. This has been recognised by the management of some cities and by deploying some urban planning instruments (rehabilitation, the involvement of new areas into construction zones, the expansion of services etc.) they keep trying to retain, even to attract young people and tax-paying active population. However, this process does not go easily. For example, it does not really help if there is a higher education institution in the locality. One might think that a large proportion of graduates will look for a job locally. Although the assumption is not wrong, as it was previously the case. Today, however, they cannot really find a job either in new towns or in big cities, so they go back to the nearby places of their permanent residence or "move up" to Budapest.

From this rule that part of industrial towns or big cities is an exception where the courses are in compliance with the needs of multinational companies settled there and their curriculum was compiled in accordance with them. Simply put, where the employers had an opportunity to select the students competent for the job themselves during the training period. Because of all these factors, although the upward flow of rural population is continuous, even this cannot compensate the decline of population. The polarisation of cities and their urban areas is continuous, as we have seen, clearly distinct zones can be identified which shows the presence of certain over-represented social groups. These pictures formed by the comparison of these zones helped to find the major differences between the development of the two town types and their urban areas.

The biggest difference between the average inhabitants was found in the case of the inner city areas of big cities and new

towns. The population of big cities reflects the classic Western European trends, while the population of new towns – perhaps not independently of the architectural character and meaning of the inner city – has specific character. While the transitional zones of cities are very heterogeneous, in the case of big cities less identifiable, in the case of new towns better identifiable groups can characterise the diversely built in areas. In the latter case they are the blue-collar workers of panel housing estates and the changing from lower to higher status population of family home neighbourhoods. There are no significant differences between the outskirts of the two town types either. In both town types, poorer and rising, better off households can be found either. However, due to the architectural limitations of new towns it is the outskirts that provide such housing solutions that in most part comply with today's expectations; this has significantly increased the value of these areas since the regime change: as the research data also verify, the proportion of higher status groups has increased here; it is them who do not want to move far away from urban services. In big cities, however, it rather seems that the outskirts are only a temporary solution and mobile families often wish to live in better physical environment. Advanced suburban zones in new town regions seem less favourable residential places, but more preferable than less developed settlements. Although the outskirts districts of big cities – even because of their bigger territory – can provide more favourable residential places for higher status groups, they still cannot be the most popular areas. The underdeveloped suburban settlements in both cases have the potential which in case of a real estate market boom (which now is likely with the introduction of the new state support system) may attract families susceptible to the most fashionable residential areas of the middle-class.

# Post-Socialist New Towns in the Urban Network

János Rechnitzer – Judit Berkes – Ádám Páthy

## Introduction

The 1989 political transition significantly changed Hungary's spatial structure and settlement network, and brought a new type of structural differentiation. Based on this, the study of former socialist new towns is given special importance, as they form a special group within the urban network. Additionally, they were more strongly affected by the transition's negative effects. Handling their crises also required special resources which have not always been available.

The main purpose of this chapter is to identify the place of new towns in the urban network, to follow up on changes that occurred after the millennium and to find out whether new towns represent an identifiable, relatively homogeneous type. The analysis uses a wide range of "hard" socio-economic indicators but also emphasises the study of certain factors (such as industrial employment and attracting employees, and special demographic processes) which are key in the state and transformation of the towns we studied. It was important to compare processes in Hungarian socialist industrial towns with similar towns in Poland using basic socio-economic indicators.

The study has been realised within the confines of the research entitled "Social Polarisation in the Hungarian and Eastern-Central European 'New Town' Regions: Impacts of Transition and Globalisation" (K 106169), funded by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office.

Thus, the chapter attempts to present the position of former socialist industrial towns in the Hungarian urban network and to describe, through specific indicators, the employment structure of these towns and some specifics of their social structures. The internal structure of the group of industrial towns will be revealed by a hierarchical cluster analysis. Finally, some of those Polish towns will be examined that show a special picture similar to Hungarian "artificial towns".

## The rankings of post-socialist towns

The ranking of former socialist new towns is analysed using unique variables categorised into five thematic principal components. The economic factors include attainable urban economic characteristics (employment rate, number of taxpayers, personal income tax rate, number of unincorporated enterprises, unemployment rate, inactive earners, business tax, number of self-employed entrepreneurs), the educational and management component describes the labour market (the percentage of intellectual leaders, people who attained higher education, white-collar workers, and service employees). Under social activity actions and institutions expressing the manifestations of local communities (participation in the votes, the number of and support for non-profit organisations, local public forums) were marked. The human resources principal component includes indicators related to higher education and institutions of higher qualifications (higher educational institutions, secondary schools); the variable group expressing innovation intends to make conclusions concerning renewal initiatives and institutions (innovation initiatives; patents and related categories, registered domain servers, companies working in the R&D&I sector, present innovative institutions), although this has not been analysed in detail in this chapter. Based on the defined five principal components, multivariable analyses were performed, assessing the role of each variable in shaping the structure then groups were formed among towns with related, identical elements in search of their characteristics and specificities.

Thus, the former socialist towns are illustrated in the following three sections within the context of the Hungarian urban network. First, their position in the key components (their ranking) based

on analyses for the years 2001 and 2011; the ten-year perspective of the changes in their positions is demonstrated in such a way. The other section,on the basis of the specific characteristics of the given town group in comparison to other cities, highlights how they differ from them and whether they show some significant features. Finally, it is demonstrated how the investigated towns can be grouped and with this the similarities and differences between the development pathways of the investigated towns is identified.

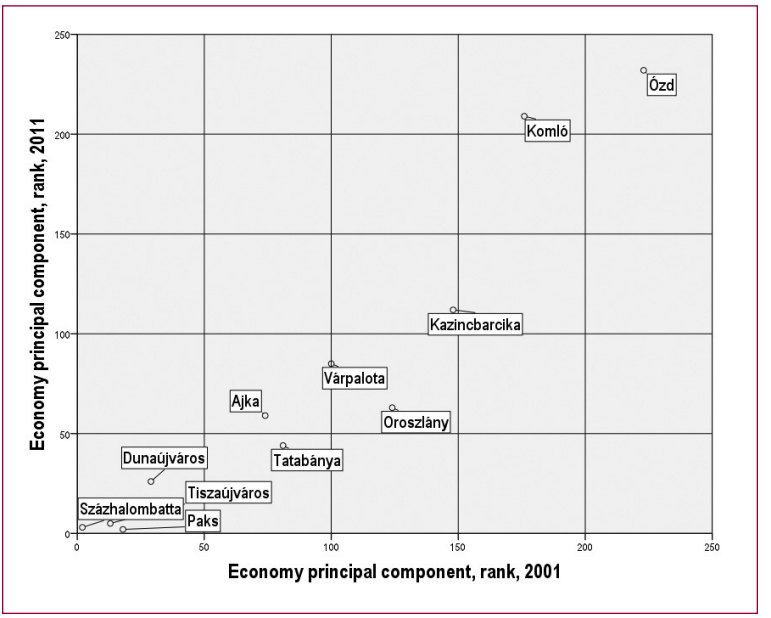
In 2001, 251 settlements of town rank could be examined; to ensure comparability, in the present study also a 251 towns based ranking was studied. The ranking was made on the basis of all the four dimensions, which well illustrates the changes having taken place in some towns or even the maintenance or the strengthening of positions.

### *Economy*

The transformation of the economic structure of former socialist towns has essentially been completed by 2001, and the 2010s are seen as the years of stability. The economic indicators of Ózd – which is one of the biggest losers of the regime change – show a smaller decline but during the previous analysis it was also at the end of the town ranking sequence, its situation has not improved, the continually initiated restructuring attempts were unsuccessful. Similar trends can be reported for Komló, it was not able to stabilise its situation so it has slipped down to the bottom part of the town group ranking list.

Százhalombatta was able to maintain its strong industrial town character – thanks to basically its chemical, oil-processing industry – the town owns one of the distinguished leadership roles in the town ranking. Paks and Tiszaújváros significantly improved their positions; they are among the top ten towns in terms of economic indicators. The biggest leap is shown by Oroszlány and Tatabánya; in both towns the economic indicators were favourable in the decade after the millennium, this is probably due to their location and local development policies.

Figure 36: The positions of former socialist towns and their shifts in the ranking based on the economic principal component (2001; 2011)




*Source: The author's own edition on the basis of the urban network database of Győr Automotive District research project*

## *Education, labour market*

Higher schooling and qualification played an important role in the restructuring of the urban network after the regime change *(Rechnitzer, 1993)*. The settling in companies primarily focused no longer on low-skilled labour force but rather on professionals, the ratio of manual workers decreased while the share of white collar workers increased.

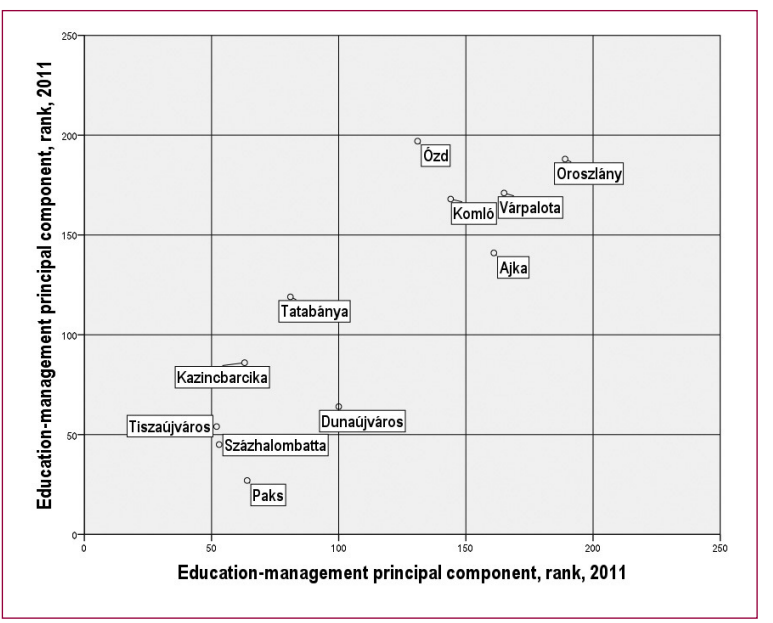
It was Ózd that produced the steepest fall in the ranking of education, sliding back by 68 places. In 1992, steel production ceased completely, the individual production units were trying to survive as an independent company – rather with less success and the durability of unemployment still cannot be eliminated. The situation of Tatabánya was different, its economy had been stabilised by the millennium, primarily due to foreign investments and the production and employment systems associated with them.

These organisations were hit hard by the 2008 crisis so the town's employment situation worsened between the two dates. It

should also be added that the educated, higher-income population does not live in the town, but rather in Tata and its region, they have moved out there, and these circumstances also played a role in its position changing in the ranking. The loss of the position of Kazincbarcika and Komló can also be explained by the crisis and the disruption of the economic structure. Várpalota's has also fallen back in rank. Tiszaújváros, however, sank only by two places lower, so it was able to maintain its relatively high level achieved in 2001, on the basis of employment and schooling indicators.

The biggest winners regarding educational indicators in the surveyed period are Dunaújváros and Paks. They show a spectacular improvement in the ranking, which can be explained partly by the high schooling demands of energy industry, as well as bythe medium-sized city's (city of county rank) widening institutional and servicing functions. Ajka, Százhalombatta and Oroszlány have also improved their situation to some extent, indicating that they were able to keep their skilled and highly trained labour force.

Figure 37: The positions of former socialist industrial towns and their shifts in the ranking based on the educational and management principal component (2001; 2011)



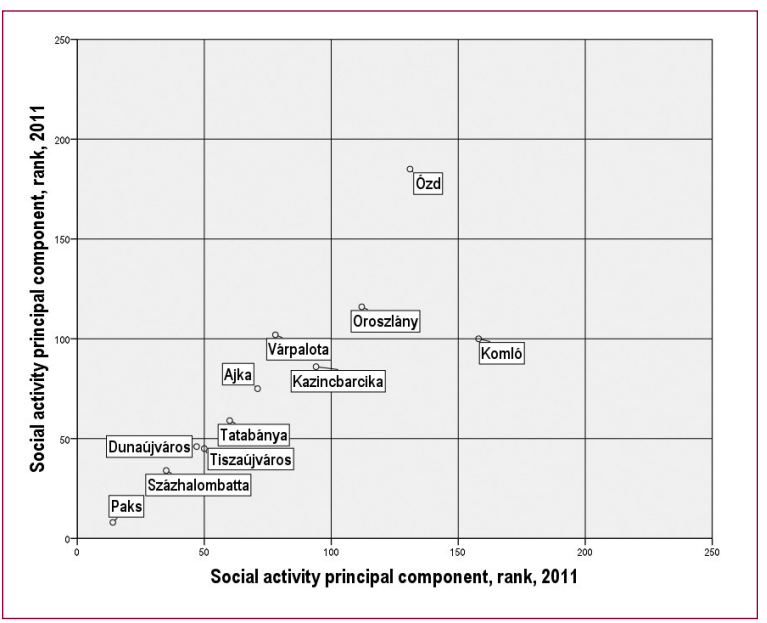

*Source: The author's own edition on the basis of the urban network database of Győr Automotive District research project*

## *Social activity and human resources*

The positions of Ózd and Várpalota changed dramatically for the two dates. The principal component's indicators were strongly bound to incomes and to local community activity, which is probably moderate in both towns, although the reasons are certainly not identical –and these towns' character, location, history, development path – may all be different.

It is noteworthy that Komló with the negative economic indicators could improve its position by the indicators of social activity; the reasons for this require further analysis. We hypothetise that the higher participation on elections indicates a disciplined community; while the city's population declined it has better parameters in other indicators. Paks as an industrial small-medium town has already had a prominent position in these activities and could further improve it. Regarding this principal component no major shifts can be observed in case of other towns, which may indicate that there were no or only little changes in social activity, and its preconditions.

Figure 38: The positions of former socialist towns and their shifts in the ranking based on the social activity principal component (2001; 2011)




*Source: The author's own edition on the basis of the urban network database of Győr Automotive District research project*

For the majority of towns the data related to human resources show an overall decline as the set of variables usually includes data referring to higher education institutions. With the exception of Dunaújváros and Tatabánya, there are no colleges or universities or even affiliated colleges or university departments in the former socialist towns either. The improving position of Százhalombatta is primarily due to its location in the agglomeration of Budapest (this partly explains the changes of the previous period).

### *Changes in income and employment*

The observed positions in the rankings prepared on the basis of complex indicators and their changes well illustrate the place of former socialist industrial cities in the urban network, and the fact that heterogeneity is more and more perceivable within the studied group,the different development paths on the basis of processes of the last decade have become more clear.

When seeking an answer to the question, what processes are going on in the background of changes, the changes of specific indicators must be examined, which themselves have significant explanatory value for economic development. On one hand, the decisive indicators of economic performance can be analysed, on the other hand, the indicators describing the structural changes.

In the latter case, one can get an answer to the question whether in the case of socialist towns that in the past decade maintained their position and made a relative progress how much role the successful process of industrial change has, and in addition, whether the investigated towns retained their industrial character both in their production and occupational structure.

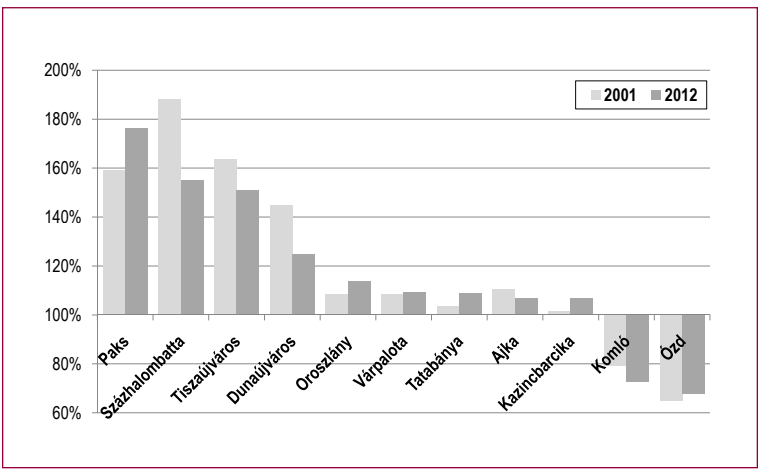
The changes in key indicators were overviewed in such a way that the values of the investigated towns were given in per cent, relative to average value of the 251 settlements of town rank for both dates. On the basis of this, both the relative positions and the shifts can be tracked accurately.

For examining the income level, the personal income tax base index was used. The values show that the studied towns occupy a relatively favourable position, in 2001, only three towns – Komló and Ózd – produced below average indicators.

Taking the changes of the last decade into account, some convergence can be experienced within the analysed group of towns,

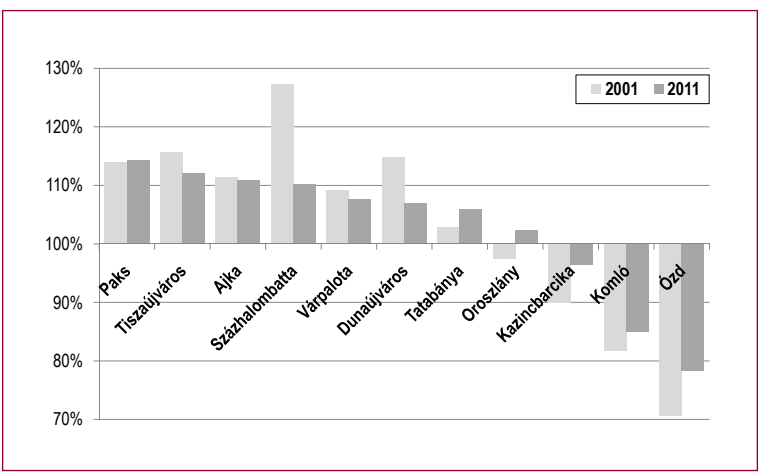
which is mainly due to the fact that out of the four towns with outstanding income indicators it is only Paks where an improving trend is seen; in Százhalombatta, Tiszaújváros and Dunaújváros a spectacular negative shift can be detected.

Figure 39: The relative value of the personal income tax base in the former socialist towns (2001; 2012)



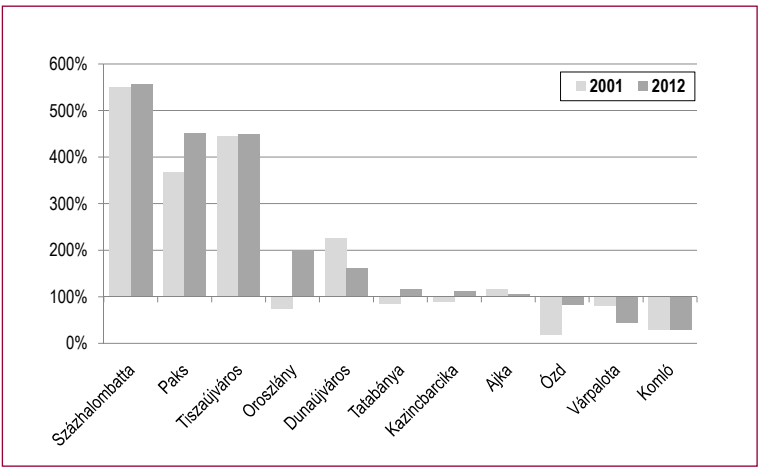

*Source:The author's own edition based on the personal income tax database of National Tax and Customs Office*

Figure 40: The relative level of employment in industrial towns (2001; 2011)




*Source: The author's own edition on the basis of CSO Census (2001, 2011) data*

Figure 41: The relative rate of business tax per capita in the former socialist towns (2001; 2012)




*Source: The author's own edition on the basis of Hungarian State Treasury data.*

Basically convergent processes can be observed in economic activity for the 2000s. A significant increase in the relative level of employment is seen in the towns occupying the worst position in this regard – Kazincbarcika, Ózd and Komló, while it is stagnating in the majority of settlements characterised by above average employment. In two towns being in a relatively favourable position compared to the average of the group – Dunaújváros and Százhalombatta – a sharp turn into a downward trend can be seen.

In terms of economic performance the relative size of business tax is a telling indicator. In this case, there is a considerable variance in the group of former socialist towns. Paks, Százhalombatta and Tiszaújváros primarily due to their large industrial plants are in the high elite of the entire urban network, further improving their relatively favourable positions gained over the past decade.The other extreme, the group of towns below the average index is represented by Ózd, Kazincbarcika and Várpalota; this latter town is characterised by favourable positions based on employment and income indicators. Far behind, they are followed by Komló which could not substantially improve its poor starting position by 2011. In terms of shifts the significant strengthening of Oroszlány is also remarkable.

## *Changes in employment structure*

The transformation of the major economic sectors' employment conditions may be a key indicator of coping with the crisis resulting from the regime change. In the light of the data we attempt to highlight the distinctive processes that were characteristic of the studied new towns and which continue to take place today – but to a different intensity.

For all the towns studied it is true that within the total residential population the rate of employment between 1980 and 2001 declined steadily, and compared to the 2001 figures, the 2011 data show a slight improvement (although it should be noted that during the investigation of the entire new town network it has become clear that public employment plays a significant role in the improvement of employment level). In 1980 the employment rate was prominent in Paks, Százhalombatta and Tiszaújváros, the three municipalities, which served as locations for the "youngest" giant investment projects. None of the three towns have succeeded in reaching this ratio ever since. The 1990 data show a little variation between the towns, it can consistently be stated that the decline in the employment rate was dramatic even in the pre-transition decade. After the millennium as the transition process was slowing down, general trends, similar to the entire urban network, can be observed in industrial towns as well.

The employment figures in 2001 well reflect the difficulties of transition resulting from the regime change. The lowest employment potential can be observed in Ózd, Kazincbarcika and Komló which the latter three towns were able to surpass by 2011, but their positions remained the same.

The general trends of changes in employment structure right from the 1980s onwards show that the number of people employed in agricultural and industrial sectors started to decline, while in services it began to grow, but its extent varied differently during each of the periods; Between 1980 and 1990, this process was clearly more moderate than after the regime change. Differences are found not only in the intensity but also in how these proportions were changing between the investigated towns, and – keeping the number of elements of the previous survey – between the figures of employment in the different sectors of the 251 cities.

During the 1980s in the Hungarian cities (251) the relative majority of employees were working in the industrial sector (46.3%), but the representation of workers in the services area was already significant even at that time (41%). In contrast to this, 66% of the employees of the investigated towns were registered in the industrial sector and 30% in the service sector. The figures for the cities reversed after the transition, so the share of employment in the service sector reached an absolute majority. In the case of industrial towns this turn around took place after the millennium, but even then service sector workers were present in nearly the same proportion as workers in the industry. The 2011 Census data clearly show that industrial character is still strong in cities (44%), there was a much more modest than the national average (30%) decline in the share of employees in this sector. It is worth noting that the decline in the overall employment rate for the industrial cities is significantly higher than the urban average – even if a "compensation" process between 2001 and 2011 is taken into account – so in addition to a smaller reduction a significant narrowing of the base can be observed.

It would be worth examining the members of the group of industrial towns separately, that is to study what characteristic features the changes in the employment figures have within each sector.

The number of employees in each sector provided the basis for this by helping to define the employment structure for the surveyed cities (251) and for 11 industrial towns in certain years (1980, 1990, 2001, and 2011). The comparison of these records made it possible to calculate the deviation of the sectoral composition of employment for each industrial town from the mean value.

In 1980, the proportion of people employed in agriculture in Paks was similar to the national urban average, which means that compared to the average of the investigated 11 towns it was much higher (by nearly 10%). The reason for this may be that although the building of the nuclear power plant had already started in 1969 its first block was put into operation in 1982, thus at that time it did not increase significantly the share of employment in industry. Besides, it must not be forgotten that Paks has always been performing market town functions and due to this inherent nature agricultural workers will always be present here in a higher proportion. As it has been mentioned earlier, in the case of industrial cities workers in the agricultural sector were always present in

a lower proportion, in 1980 in Ózd, Kazincbarcika and Komló the presence of workers employed in the agricultural sector was by 10% less than the national urban average.

In the 1980s the industrial employment ratio was particularly high in Ózd and Tiszaújváros, exceeding the national urban average by 25%, and the group average by more than 5%. In contrast to this, although there were industrial workers in Tatabánya, Dunaújváros and Paks in an above the national average ratio, yet they were slightly below average in the group, and this trend has subsequently been further strengthened, and in the case of the former two towns service sector won spectacularly more space, as Dunaújváros and Tatabánya of all the municipalities studied are the two most populous ones and thus this fact itself influences the palette of services offered. Tatabánya is a county seat at the same time, the centre of a larger region in the case of non-market services, so its employment needs are higher for non-market services. However, it can also be stated that in 1980, the presence of the service sector was weaker in industrial cities than the national urban average.

In the early 1990s industrial employment is still in the leading proportion, which is much higher than the national urban average. Tatabánya is the only town, whicha little bit obscuring its mining town character, had to perform the administrative tasks of more and more public services, and parallel with this, the proportion of people employed in the service sector was increasing. To a lesser extent, but in Paks, the employment rate in the industrial sector was also lower than in the other industrial towns.

By 2001, these trends appeared to be strengthened, thus the importance of agriculture was more and more declining, while the service sector became more and more prominent. However, the effects of the radical change in the industrial sector had become measurable which in the case of Tatabánya still can be explained by performing the county seat, and the town of county rank functions but the data also suggest that the two biggest losers of the forced industrialisation are Ózd and Komló. In the case of Százhalombatta the share of employment in the industrial sector is well below the average of the 11 investigated towns, which is the first sign that it began serving the labour demands of Budapest by the relative shrinking of local employment capacities.

According to the latest (2011) data, it can be stated that the role of agriculture is less dominant, employment rate in the industrial

sector is higher and the importance of service sector is still lower than the national urban average. The comparison to the average of the surveyed towns showed that in Ózd the employment rate in the agricultural sector was close to the national average, and it is higher than the average of the industrial towns. This means that parallel with the shrinking of absolute employment all sectors, except the industrial one, have undergone changes, after the closure of the factory the administrative tasks remained, which can be seen from the data as well.

The same is true for Paks as has been explained just above. In Ajka, one of the town's largest employers has been closed down thus liquidating one of the pillars of the local industry but here the proportion of industrial workers is high within the circle of industrial towns, and the presence of service sector is weak. One even more spectacular example for that is Oroszlány, where industry has maintained its strength and still does not concentrate servicing functions. The same is true for Tiszaújváros, where industrial base has not declined much.

One of the aims of the research is to find the role of industrial towns in the urban network. To do this, industrial towns were examined to see which position they can take regarding the proportion of industrial employment in the total urban network of (251) cities. To highlight the changes the rates for the year 1990 were sorted as a first step.The 11 industrial towns fall into the 10% of municipalities which could register the highest rate of industrial employment this year. Tatabánya is the only exception to this rule, which is explained by the reasons described above. After the regime change there has been a greater variance in terms of rankings, but the investigated industrial towns are still in the "upper" quintile. In the light of the 2011 data it can be verified that Ózd is the biggest loser of the period, producing the 10$^{th}$ highest rate of industrial employment in 1990, but being on the 73$^{rd}$ position in the ranking in 2011. There was a similar level of fall-back in the case of Százhalombatta, which can be explained by the proximity of Budapest.

### *Employment potential*

Beyond the structural characteristics of employment the economic development processes of the surveyed towns is very well illustrated by changes in the employment potential. In this con-

text, it was studied what changes has the figure[1] of local employees undergone, on the other hand, by using commuting data, it was also examined what features can be discovered regarding the role of labour catchment centre.

Looking at the number of local employees it can be generally stated that in the former socialist industrial towns the narrowing of the employment potential was significantly greater after the regime change than in other towns. In the year 2011 in comparison to 1980 a 38.3% rate of decline was experienced in industrial towns, while the aggregate index of other investigated towns was only 22.3%. For industrial towns producing the largest decline this ratio exceeds 50%, of them Várpalota (69.7%) and Komló (63.7%) stand out; these two cities with Ózd (58.7%) even on national level are at the end of the list, among the ten towns showing the worst tendency. Lower than the total urban average decline rate is seen only for Százhalombatta, Paks and Tiszaújváros; the last town is one of the rare exceptions where the number of employees in the municipality has slightly expanded during the last three decades.

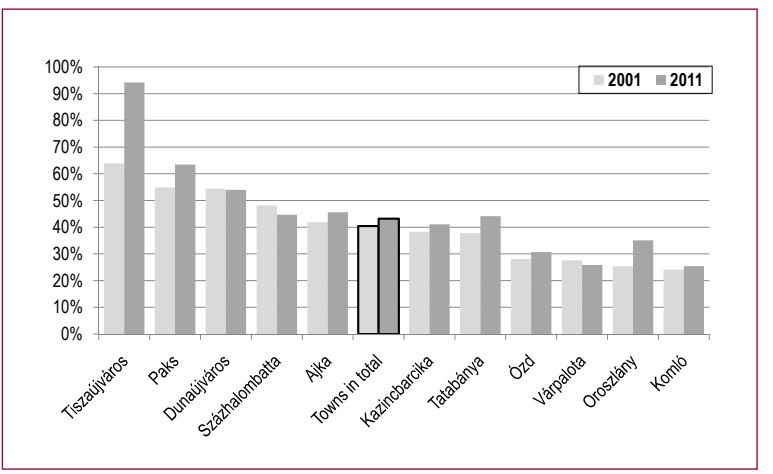
Analysing the processes in the period between 2001 and 2011, it can be said that the former socialist industrial towns overall have not taken a different from the whole urban network development path with typically slight growth in the number of local employees; the 5.1% growth rate may be considered to be somewhat more favourable in comparison with the other cities' corresponding indicator (4.4%). However, examining each of the towns individually, significant differences can be observed for the same period. The number of local employees dramatically increased in Tiszaújváros (44.1%) and in Oroszlány (30.8%); considering the entire urban network these rates are also outstanding. Tatabánya and Paks show a relatively favourable trend but there is a significant decline of around 10% in Dunaújváros and Várpalota.

The employment potential can even more spectacularly be demonstrated by a relative indicator comparing the number of local employees with the total population of the municipality. In this regard, Tiszaújváros shows the best image; the number of

[1] The number of local employees in this case is understood as all the employed staff in the locality (local residents, local workers, and inward commuters).

local employees in 2011 was nearly the same as the permanent population (94.2%); in comparison to year 2001, it is more than a 30% increase. In Paks that can also be characterised by high rates (63.4%), the progress has been much less, about 10%; the situation is similar for Oroszlány as well but here the rate numbers are much lower (35.1%). The local employment potential of the two towns with the weakest economic performance, Ózd (30.1%) and Komló (25.4%) on the basis of this indicator is considered to be very weak and even Várpalota (25.9%) can be in the same category with them.The rest of the towns in 2011, were located in the band of 40-55%. Looking at these data it can be stated that after the regime change the inclusion of the former socialist industrial towns by their employment potential into the urban network shows an increasingly heterogeneous picture, and this trend continued even after the millennium. After a temporary decline in the 1990s the towns that can be considered successful from this aspect (Tiszaújváros, Paks, Oroszlány and partly Tatabánya) were able to improve their position and the situation of some cities stabilised at a lower level after 2000 (Ajka, Dunaújváros, Kazincbarcika), and there are some towns (Komló, Ózd) where the "free fall" following the regime change did not stop even in the last decade. The transformation after the regime change is well demonstrated by the fact

Figure 42: Changes in the ratio of local employees within the total local population (2001; 2011)



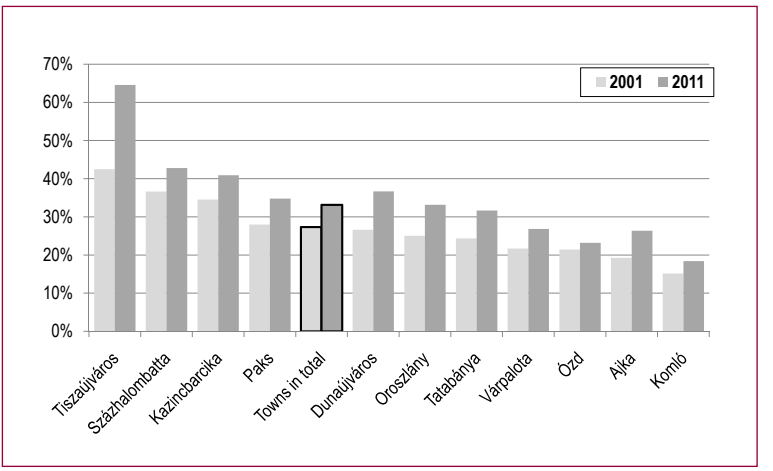

*Source: The author's own edition on the basis of CSO Census (2001, 2011) data*

that based on data from the year 1980, concerning the indices studied here, only two industrial towns (Ózd, Tatabánya) were not in the first third part of the city ranking, while by 2011 Kazincbarcika, Komló, Oroszlány and Várpalota also dropped out from there. A good illustration of the general decline is the average ranking order of socialist industrial towns – based on 251 cities – in 1970 it was 34, in 1980 48, while in 2011 it was only 92.

The specific features of commuting make the image of employment potential more diverse. In terms of national indicators, basically speaking, there was a decrease in the absolute number of commuters starting from the 1980s – which coupled with an increased downturn of employment still moderately increased the proportion of commuters – after the millennium this trend is reversed, additionally increasing the rate; as a result of this, by 2011 more than one third of employees in Hungary (34.5%) were commuters *(Kovács–Egedy–Szabó, 2015)*. The aggregate examination of the inward commuting ratio[2] among industrial town employees reveals that in the period between 2001 and 2011 in the former socialist industrial towns the pace of growth was faster than average, so they were a little bit ahead of the rest of the towns. While from 1980 until the turn of the millennium, there was no significant difference in inward commuting ratio between industrial cities and the rest of the towns, by 2011, the gap had visibly deepened; the inward commuting ratio in industrial towns was 36%, while in the rest of the towns the overall ratio was 32.9%. Examining the towns one by one, in all cases an upward trend is seen, the growth of inward commuting ratio only in three towns – Komló, Ózd, Várpalota – remained under the national urban average (6%), in other cases exceeded it. The indicator of Tiszaújváros is outstanding; its inward commuting ratio has increased to one and a half fold (from 42 to 65%), which means a 22% increase in absolute terms. The growth rate indicator of Dunaújváros (10%) and Oroszlány (8.1%) also significantly exceed the urban average. Regarding the ratio of inward commuters among local employees, in addition to the already mentioned Tiszaújváros (7th),

[2] Inward commuting ratio means the share of inward commuters in the total number of local employees.

Figure 43: The ratio of inward commuters among local employees (2001; 2011)




*Source: The author's own edition on the basis of CSO Census (2001, 2011) data*

Százhalombatta (53rd) and Kazincbarcika (62nd) take a relatively good position in the ranking of towns. In five towns – Ajka, Komló, Ózd, Tatabánya and Várpalota – the inward commuting ratio remained below the national urban average.

In case of outward commuting the dynamics was not similar between 2001 and 2011, the growth rate of the ratio is similar to that of other towns, and thus, the level in 2011 was the same, around 25% as well. The big break in this case was brought by the regime change; the typical for the socialist industrial towns, negligible outward commuting ratio[3] by 2001 caught up with the average of the other cities.The one by one examination of towns reveals greater heterogeneity than for the inward commuting ratio and the change tendencies cannot be considered as one-way processes. The positions of the three towns with the highest rate outward commuting rate figures in 2011 are radically different from each other in terms of employment potential characteristics. In the case of Százhalombatta that can be characterised by dynamic, positive economic indicators but shrinking relative local

[3] Outward commuting ratio means the share of outward commuters in the total number of local employees.

employment potential, the high outward commuting ratio (41.2%) is mainly due to its proximity and the labour force draining impact of Budapest; it is the capital city's suburbanisation processes that stand behind the positive net migration and population growth, thus, a substantial portion of newly arriving citizens has already got a job in Budapest. In Várpalota, the most affected town by outward commuting (50.9%) a continuing decline of local employment potential can be experienced, and the town's geographical location – the proximity of two relatively dynamic centres (Székesfehérvár, Veszprém) – provides favourable opportunities for absorbing the local labour surplus. About two-thirds of the town's outward commuters work on the two adjacent county seats. The fact that Pétfürdő, formerly belonging to the town, became independent in 1997 facilitated the narrowing of local employment potential and the increase of outward commuting ratio. It is important to note that the most drastic changes can be observed in the case of Várpalota; while Százhalombatta and Oroszlány had significantly higher than the industrial towns' average outward commuting ratio before the regime change, this indicator in Várpalota was among the lowest values on national level (in 1980, only 5.1%). The position of Oroszlány (37.4%) is special from the aspect, that its improving employment potential yet could not fully compensate for the negative trends of the 1990s, after the millennium, as a consequence of which by 2001 nearly half of the employees had become outward commuters. In any case, Oroszlány is the only former socialist industrial town – and it is among the 35 towns in Hungary – where from 2001 to 2011 outward commuting ratio was declining and the extent of this downfall (9.3%) is the second highest among the 251 cities studied. The geographical factors are partly responsible for the – already in pre-transition period – higher than the average degree of outward commuting. From the 1990s onward the proximity of Tatabánya provided increasing employment opportunities, although it should be noted that the only about a quarter of outward commuters work in the county seat.

The examination of the impacts of commuting balance on employment potential reveals that the former socialist industrial towns form a specific, more or less homogeneous group on the basis that the resources of the tendency, manifesting in somewhat more favourable than the overall average of towns employment

potential after the turn of the millennium, are less balanced. It can be seen that the vast majority of the supply of local employment expansion is provided by inward commuters from other settlements; among the towns showing an increase in the absolute number of local employees there are only two – Oroszlány and Tatabánya – where the number of resident local employees also increased between 2001 and 2011, the rest of the towns show a decrease in this aspect, which of course, is largely due to outward migration, strongly present among the active, especially young people. This one-sided increase may lead to the question having been formulated in the introductory part; how the carry over effects of "under-urbanisation" formulated in the context of delayed urban development prevail in the present. A more detailed assessment of employment potential beyond this will help to refine and also to explain the image, which shows the transformation of the former socialist industrial towns and the further differentiation of their development pathways.

## The internal divisions of the post-socialist new towns

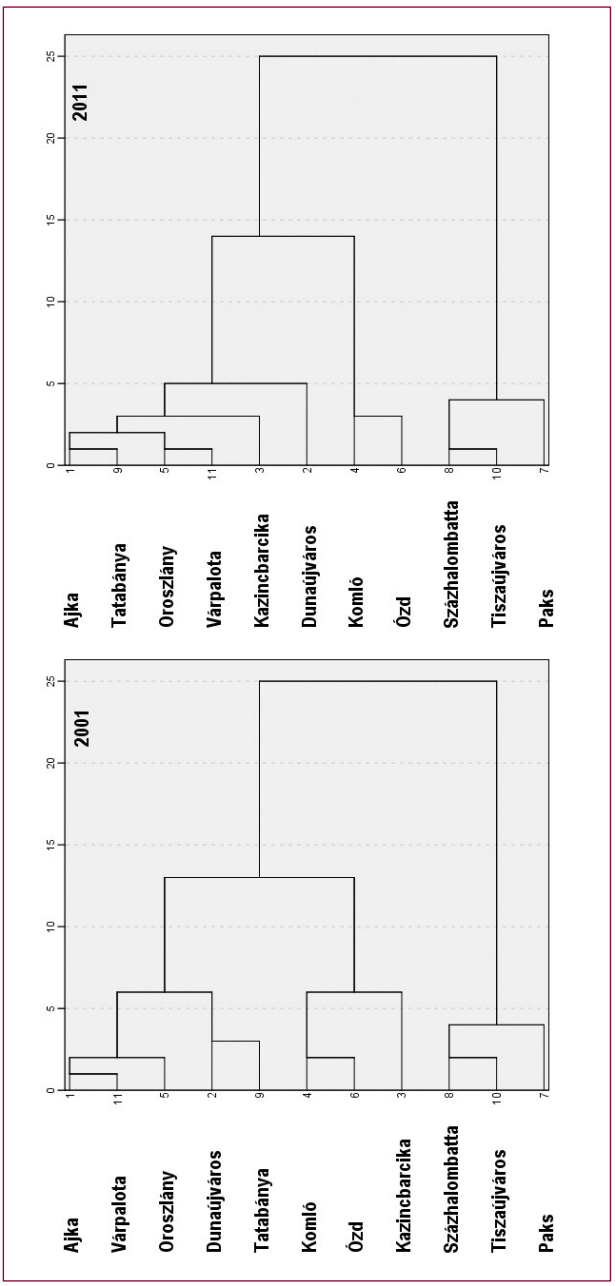
The internal stratification of the towns was examined by using hierarchical cluster analysis. Instead of the five main components originally developed only three were included in the analysis since the effects of human resources and of innovation indicators on the formation of groups are less relevant from the aspects of our analysis. The results of the cluster analysis for the two points of time reveal that the internal order of stratification is considered as stable, shifts and/or changes in the course of group formation are not typical. Based on the cluster structure three categories of cities are well outlined, the stratification may be interpreted as a kind of development hierarchy as well.

The first group consists of the three towns, which stand out from the group of former socialist towns mainly by their economic performance. For Paks and Tiszaújváros it is the presence of a large plants that bases the favourable position; for Százhalombatta positive conditions are ensured by being the only domestic crude oil processing base, the location in the proximity of Budapest, and being part of the capital city's agglomeration zone.

The second cluster is made up of towns where the negative trends in the nineties stopped or reversed in the past decade. Ajka, Várpalota and Oroszlány in economic terms show an improvement compared to the millennium, and there are no negative trends in the skills and occupational structure indicators. However, the indicators of social activity moved adversely in this town group. Interestingly, these indicators generally do not have a negative impact on the former socialist towns; in fact, with the exception of Ózd these towns have improved their positions to some extent. Tatabánya, the fourth city belonging to this cluster, indicates changes in the last ten years because as long as its indicators for the year 2001 showed similar values with those of Dunaújváros – so to speak they were twin-towns – according to the clustering for year 2011 did not belong to either group. The county seat has significantly improved its economic positions, however, based on its labour skills, and occupational structure had an opposite career. Dunaújváros is a town with relatively favourable starting position, able to essentially improve its positions, so based on the 2011 classification it rather appears as a separate entity.

The third group is represented by Komló and Ózd, as the two towns with the worst indices showing the signs of complex crises and of further falling behind. Both the complex indicators of the changes of economic potential and the unique indicators having some demonstrational force for explaining economic performance, illustrate the unfavourable trends, and a more moderate pace of recognisable improving tendencies, registered at certain factors in the case of other towns. From the changes of indicators it can be deducted that the unfavourable trends are present in several dimensions, in a mutually reinforcing manner in these two towns. Based on the data for year 2001 Kazincbarcika showed similar to these two towns' features, but in that case, over the past decade the degree of falling behind and its complexity were not moving along with the indicators of Komló and Ózd; in the case of Kazincbarcika the trends were basically stagnating. As a result of this, the town cannot be classified clearly into the group of the weakest performance indicators. It has shown low investment attraction ability due to its primarily weaker than the average economic endowments, unfavourable geographical location, and other factors.

Figure 44: The hierarchical clustering structure of the former socialist towns on the basis of the investigated three principal components (2001; 2011)




*Source: The author's own edition on the basis of the urban network database of Győr Automotive District research project*

## International background

As a complement to the analysis of domestic towns the examination of some key indicators provides an opportunity to place the processes described into a broader context by involving Polish industrial towns. Performing a multi-dimensional analysis based on complex indicators on a similar data structure was not possible as certain indicators are not available on municipal level in Poland, and some indicators even in our domestic study were based on individual data collection, which in this case cannot be carried out.

When selecting the range of surveyed towns, efforts were made to apply the same criteria determining the scope of the national socialist industrial towns. Based on these criteria, 11 Polish towns were selected whose formation, development was basically determined by industry and their town rank was obtained under the period of state socialism – the only exception of this is Żory, a town with centuries-old tradition, but its development as an industrial town mostly dates back to the period of socialism. It was also important that the selected Polish industrial towns in terms of production structures and sectoral determination should be in similar situation to that of the investigated domestic settlements, so among them centres of various industries can be found, including coal mining (Jastrzębie-Zdrój, Ruda Śląska, Piekary Śląskie), metallurgy and metal processing industry (Stalowa Wola, Świętochłowice accordingly, Żory), mechanical engineering (Tychy, Świdnik) and chemical industry (Kędzierzyn-Koźle, Police), as well as a town with a more diversified industry (Myszków). Similarly to some Hungarian towns, there are a few among the Polish ones as well of which industrial traditions reach back to the period before World War II – such as some cities in the Upper Silesia industrial region and Stalowa Wola, the metallurgical centre in the Central Industrial Area developed in the 1930s – but basically these cities were the same priority targets of socialist industrialisation as Ózd, Tatabánya and Várpalota in Hungary. Nowa Huta, perhaps the most spectacular symbol of the Polish socialist heavy industry investments had to be excluded from the analysis because it is not an independent settlement and a only very limited scope of statistical data is available about it. *Table 28* shows the basic features of the Polish towns involved in the analysis.

First, the demographic processes in the towns are compared, which allows to get a partial, indirect picture of the development paths of settlements. In the 1990s the rapid population decline of towns and among them especially of socialist industrial towns is a typical trend in the former socialist countries. This happened to a similar extent and pace in Poland as well *(Grossmann Haase–Rink–Steinführer, 2008; Stryjakiewicz–Ciesiolka–Jaroszewski, 2012)*. It can be seen from the demographic data of the surveyed cities, that the population decline continued even after the millennium, this process is slightly faster in the case of Hungarian cities (between 2000 and 2014 the population loss was 8% compared to the 5.8% loss value of Polish towns). Only the population of one town – Százhalombatta – increased in the period of the survey, and even in one Polish town – Świdnik – was the population decline rate below the average value of the given country's towns.

In order to more precisely determine the demographic conditions of the towns, an examination of the primary factors behind the population changes is needed. In terms of age structure today it can no longer be said in either country, that the age structure of

Table 28: The Polish industrial towns studied

| Town | Year of town declaration | Population (2014) |
|---|---|---|
| Jastrzębie-Zdrój | 1963 | 90 794 |
| Kędzierzyn-Koźle | 1950 | 62 840 |
| Myszków | 1950 | 32 499 |
| Piekary Śląskie | 1939 | 56 755 |
| Police | 1961 | 33 404 |
| Ruda Śląska | 1959 | 140 669 |
| Stalowa Wola | 1945 | 63 291 |
| Świdnik | 1954 | 40 078 |
| Świętochłowice | 1947 | 51 494 |
| Tychy | 1951 | 128 621 |
| Żory | 1272 | 62 051 |

*Source: Polish Statistical Office*

industrial towns can be regarded as youthful and dynamic which was typical for the 1990s *(Szymanska, 1993);* today among the investigated towns only five were found (Ózd, Police, Százhalombatta, Tiszaújváros, Żory), where the ratio of younger age groups in the population surpassed the national average. The rearrangement of the age structure of course, determines the natural demographic processes as well; for both the Hungarian and Polish towns it is seen that the trends were unfavourable over the past decades but to varying degrees. Considering the whole territory of Poland the demographic processes of population are characterised by favourable indicators – an annual average of 0.2 per thousand natural population growth between 2002 and 2014, while in Hungary this indicator is -3.7 per thousand – and similar disparities are found in the case of the investigated towns as well.

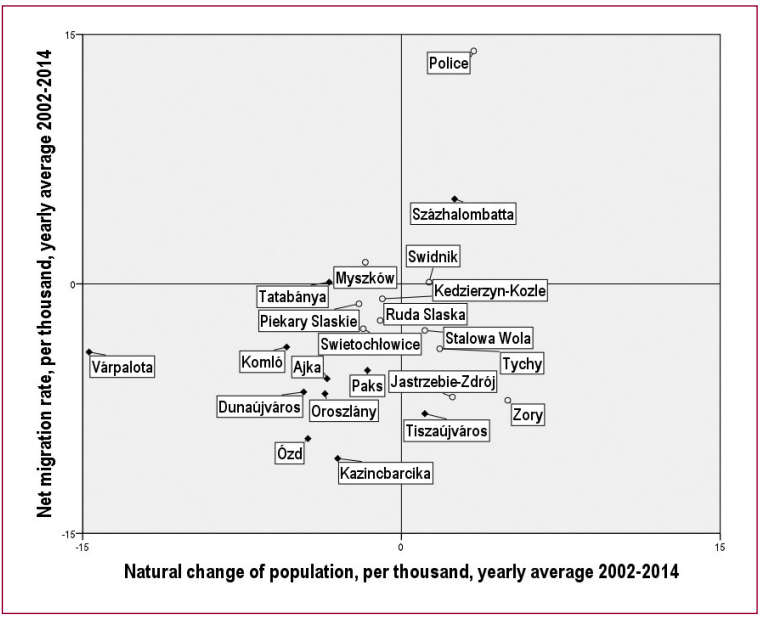
There is a natural population growth in six Polish towns in the indicated period, while in Hungary it can only be observed in two cases – Százhalombatta and Tiszaújváros. However, by taking the migratory movements into account, the differences are smaller between the Hungarian and Polish towns; in both cases, the constant exodus is a characteristic feature, with only a few exceptions, with sustained positive net migration. On the basis of these two indicators the demographic profile of the Hungarian and Polish industrial towns can be drawn, as shown in *Figure 45*.

It is clearly visible that in terms of demographic characteristics there is a perceptible difference between the towns of the two countries; while the exodus is considered a general, identical trend of both countries, the demographic indicators show differences between the towns of the two countries; in the majority of Polish towns natural increase has a certain compensation effect, which explains the lower the rate of population decline.

Comparing the employment rate[4] with the weight of industrial employment rate there is an opportunity to typify the restructuring processes which have taken place in the towns, both by their character and their relative success. Basically speaking, in terms of relative employment ratio the data of Polish cities contain substantially less favourable values, both for the year of 2001 and for the year of

[4] For reasons of comparability, the ratio of employees within the population aged 15 or more was used in the survey.

Figure 45: The demographic trends of the towns studied (2002-2014) (annual averages)



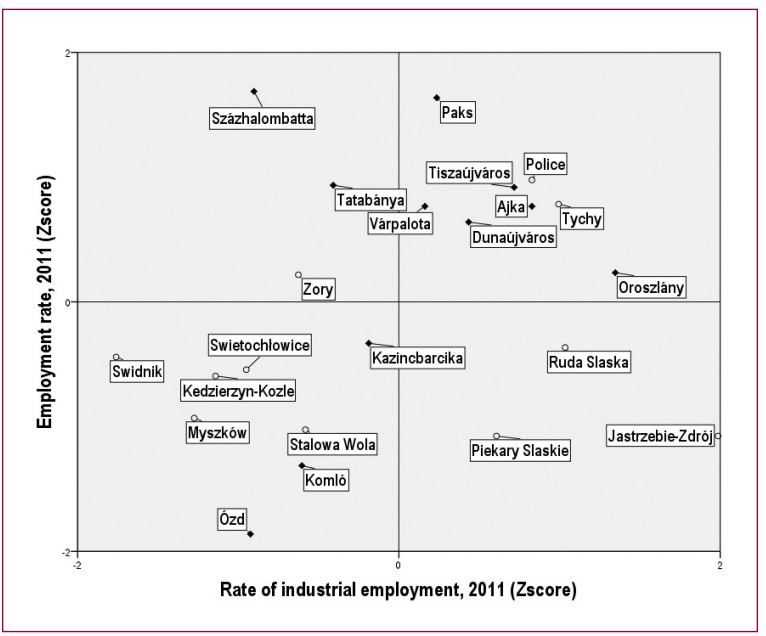

*Source: The author's own edition on the basis of CSO T-STAR and Glówny Urzad Statystyczny – Local Data Bank data*

2011. While in the majority of the Hungarian industrial towns in both years the rates are above the national average – the three exceptions in both cases are Komló, Kazincbarcika and Ózd – in the Polish towns only the indicators for Police exceed significantly the national average, and in 2011 Tychy was catching up to it. While in the case of the Hungarian towns there was some convergence in employment in 2011, in the Polish cities the deviations were relatively similar, the lagging cities did not improve their position significantly, but cities in a better position did not fall back either.

Looking at the relative proportion of employees in the industry, it is seen that in 2011, for both the Hungarian and the Polish towns the industrial employment rate was approximately one and a half times more than the national average. On this basis, industrial town characteristics can be clearly identified in both countries, but the tendencies of change compared to 2001 are going in the opposite direction. While in the Hungarian towns during the last 10 years an increase in the relative rate is observed in general – only in Százhalombatta can be seen a slight downward trend – i.e.

the decrease in the industrial employment rate does not really affected these towns, in the case of Polish cities there is a significant decrease – along constant national industrial employment rates – which suggests that in Poland the excessive concentration of the spatial structure of industry has eased during the recent period. In some cities – the mining and metallurgical centres of the Upper Silesian industrial zone and Police – the industrial employment rate remained above 50%, but in towns only slightly exceeding the national average already in the year 2001 – Myszków, Świdnik, Kędzierzyn-Koźle – there was a further decrease, a decade after the millennium these towns did no longer show primary industrial character in terms of employment.The comparison of employment rate with the industrial employment rate for the year 2011 is shown in *Figure 46*.

Figure 46: The position of the Polish and Hungarian industrial towns on the basis of employment rate and industrial employment rate (2011) (relative standard values)[5]




*Source: The author's own edition on the basis of CSO T-STAR and Główny Urzad Statystyczny – Local Data Bank data.*

[5] The scores show the values of standardised (0 average, unit variance) variables generated from the ratios compared to national average.

Comparing the indicators the types that can be linked to the differing development paths depending on the success and way of restructuring can be well defined. Basically towns with high employment rate can be regarded as successful. Among them renewing, restructuring towns are making up one group. Százhalombatta can be regarded as such a town; its employment diversification is primarily due to its favourable position and location in the Budapest agglomeration; the other is Tatabánya, where on one hand the transformation of traditional mining based production structure has partially taken place – primarily due to foreign capital investment – on the other hand, with the increase of its regional role, the tertiary sector has also strengthened.

The other group of successful towns consists of those where the preservation of good positions was secured in a way by the industry. Such towns, usually built on a big industrial plant, are the centres of more innovative, more competitive sectors of heavy industry. By this primarily the chemical industry is meant; the conditions of Tiszaújváros and Police meet these criteria. Paks, as another special example of an industrial plant-based town which can be characterised by positive trends, owes its favourable position to the energy industry. Those towns can also belong to this category where the structural change was not primarily going together with the diversification of the production structure but rather brought about a relative success in the utilisation of the existing industrial potentials. Tychy and partly Dunaújváros are towns of such a type. External factors have a greater impact on the disposition of Oroszlány, and Várpalota into this group. In terms of their locations, they belong to the primary labour catchment area of dynamic or dynamising centres (Székesfehérvár, Tatabánya), which played a major role in their recovery from the crisis parallel to the degradation of their industrial capacities before the millennium. This ambivalent situation is well reflected in the indicators of Várpalota, where the extremely low local employment potential generated large-scale migration and population restructuring but the indicators of economic activity and of living conditions do not signify definitely unfavourable situations.

One group of towns with low employment rate include those Polish mining and metallurgical centres where heavy industrial activity has been preserved, although to a more limited extent, and where the benefits of the town's favourable location can be

utilised in some form (the three towns are parts of the Upper Silesian conurbation).

The towns in the worst position are characterised by the downfall of industrial employment level with low labour force participation ratio. These towns are considered to be the biggest losers of the transition; the restructuring process was inhibited by mutually reinforcing negative factors. Not only their current situation is regarded as unfavourable, but generally it can be declared about them that over the past decade, instead of catching-up processes and consolidation they are increasingly characterised by further falling behind. For most of these towns beyond the regression of heavy industry or mining their far away location from dynamic regions is another very significant problem (Komló, Ózd, Stalowa Wola, Świdnik) so their opportunities to join the suppliers' networks and to attract new capital investments are rather limited.

The joint investigation of the situation of Polish and Hungarian industrial towns and of the recent more than a decade period suggests that the nature and the extent of transformational crisis and the successful and unsuccessful ways of restructuring show a similar picture for the two countries. In both countries industrial towns are forming a special group in the urban network which can be well characterised in some ways and which face similar problems, but their opportunities and the pathways they have taken over the past decade are very diverse.

## Conclusions

One of the major goals of analysing socio-economic processes in the former socialist post-industrial towns after the millennium was to prepare a kind of register about those tendencies which serve as a basis for the surveyed towns to appear in a well-identifiable specific group. Furthermore, those tendencies were also investigated which serve as a basis for rather an inclusion into an urban network shaping under a new type of framework. To meet this end, in addition to providing an overall analysis of complex indicators the aim was to highlight more specific factor groups; those that in the past, had a distinctive character mainly in regard of occupational structure, employment potential, and social structure.

The analyses reveal a mixed picture;in some cases, common characteristics can be noticed, but in many aspects the dissolution of the specific nature, a kind of new fundaments based – successful or less successful – integration can be observed. The rapid transformation processes of the 1990s, turning into different directions, based on the ability of coping with complex crises and on the existence of its supporting resources, strongly determined the pathways of the investigated towns in the years following the millennium.

The primary factor of the differentiation of the former socialist industrial towns is the extent of the settlement's industrial character. Primarily the cities based on a big plant or on the innovative and advanced sectors of heavy industry – chemical, energy industry – can be regarded as places where the transition was in such a way successful that industrial production remained a dominant factor and the towns managed to more or less retain their positions. Another way of stabilisation based on industry; the renewal of the production structure can also be discovered to some extent – in the cases of Oroszlány and Tatabánya – but its possibilities are limited to areas that were the primary targets for foreign direct investment from the 1990s onwards. The falling behind of towns characterised by the preservation of their industrial character but also by the drastic narrowing of their potentials and capacities and by the lack of internal resources necessary for restructuring continued after the millennium.

Those towns can be considered as examples of successful transition in which to some extent a detachment from the circle of industrial towns can be observed, either through a significant shift in the production and employment structure (Százhalombatta) or making it more balanced (Tatabánya) in such a way that they are not considered as a forced process pushing towards a further lag.

# The Hungarian Old and New Towns – The Results of the Comparative Analyses

Adrienne Csizmady

## Specificities of the historical background

The characteristics and the various ways of urban development have been studied from many aspects. This chapter seeks to find out how the new towns' situation has changed compared to the old towns in the period since the regime change. Which factors played a key role in this change, which ones were marginal, and to what extent can it be demonstrated that the difference between the two groups (old towns and new towns) can be used as a basis for a new development model for new towns[1]. The study explores the overall changes of the past decade through the sample of 11 old and 11 new towns, mainly relying on statistical data from the CSO *(Table 29)*.

The study's first goal is to uncover the different historical roots and find out the extent of urban characteristics present in the town groups examined at the start of social modernisation – in other words the basis the socialist planned economy was later built on. The starting point is the end of the 1800s as this was the

The study has been realised within the confines of the research entitled "Social Polarisation in the Hungarian and Eastern-Central European 'New Town' Regions: Impacts of Transition and Globalisation" (K 106169), funded by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office.

[1] This paper was prepared under the research project of the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund. Registration id.: 81547 K OTKA

Table 29: Sample settlements

| New (industrial) towns | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ajka | Oroszlány | Tatabánya |
| Dunaújváros | Ózd | Tiszaújváros |
| Kazincbarcika | Paks | Várpalota |
| Komló | Százhalombatta | |
| **Old towns** | | |
| Baja | Gyöngyös | Szekszárd |
| Dombóvár | Eger | Szentendre |
| Eger | Mohács | Tata |
| Esztergom | Pápa | |

*Source: Csizmady, 2013*

period when most Hungarian settlements underwent a significant development, evolving from small towns to medium-sized ones.

Settlements in the old town group were mostly traditional small towns in the 1870s and 1880s, (with their 9-20 thousand population). Four settlements fell outside this group. Compared to the others, two of them were of considerable importance: Baja with a population of 20,000 and Eger, the episcopal seat, which were medium-sized towns. Two settlements were not yet towns: in this period Szentendre and Dombóvár were villages with population between 3 and 5 thousand. The (predecessor settlements of) new towns can be divided into two groups: villages and small towns with 3-6 thousand residents and small villages with 900-1,500 residents. In the 1800s several settlements rose to the rank of town due to the beginnings of the formation of civil society. However, all of these are old towns, as the development of several new towns started with delay.

The major driving force of development in the 1870s was the extraction and processing of raw materials, as well as trade on sea, rivers, and rail. Later on large-scale industrial production was built on this between 1900 and 1939. Rapid industrial development was accompanied by significant population growth, which slowly brought the two groups together. While the population figures of the old town group were 4.5 times higher than that of the new town group's, this difference shrank significantly by 1930 to 2.7-

fold. Despite this, new towns only received the rank of town under the socialist regime, thanks to forced industrialisation.

Industrialisation and population growth transformed the structure of settlements as well. Cities saw the appearance of urban institutions, and they became centres that provided services to their surroundings. Villages also began to transform, which was naturally less significant and of a different scale. It can be said that despite the fact that a few of the settlements we studied have developed in a slightly different way than others, but on an overall level each settlement of the new towns' and old towns' group started with different heritages. Old towns were all settlements with middle-class population that was growing along with the booming trade and industry of the late 1800s. They had institutions typical of small and mid-sized towns, as well as services, trade and industry, which continued to rapidly develop after the turn of the century. The towns' historic areas mostly went on to become today's city centres, the majority of public service institutions built then, are still operating today. Although their development was temporarily halted by World War II but it continued later, building on the foundations laid earlier.

The group of new towns (or their predecessors) is more heterogeneous. It can be divided into three groups. One part consists of settlements which were already municipalities or small towns at the end of the 1800s, whose growth was stimulated by the construction of railways, the extraction of raw materials, and the industry built thereupon (Ajka, Kazincbarcika, Komló, Oroszlány, Ózd, Tatabánya). Socialist industrialisation after World War II built upon these foundations when restarting and expanding industrial activity and creating large cities. Among other factors this was facilitated by mergers with surrounding communities.

The second group consists of municipalities without any industrial or urban past. Their urbanisation was solely due to the forced industrialisation in the socialist period and its "greenfield" investments (such as e.g. Dunaújváros), or due to later but of similar nature industrial developments (Százhalombatta, Tiszaújváros).

The third group consists of towns whose civilian origins (apparent in its urban structure) were destroyed during the war. Here the structure of socialist heavy industry was built upon former industrial structures. Várpalota is such an example, which in the 1800s had a significant number of Jewish craftsmen who boosted

the town's development, and saw the establishment of coal mining and a power station in the early 1900s. Another example is Paks, where civic development based on Jewish trade also created the historic city centre with its typical institutions. However, due to the devastation of war and the socialist industrial policy, none of the towns could continue their traditional development. Instead, they entered a new kind of development phase.

## Impacts of socialist development policy (1945–1989)

The biggest difference between the two town groups is in their historical embeddedness (their urban structures and institutional systems). Namely, old towns have a long history of urban legal status and of fulfilling central functions. This history can be observed in the development of their structures in the form of a historic city centre which still bears the architectural features of the second half of the 19th century. New towns lack these features, either because they have not been formed, or because they were destroyed during the war. These settlements (at least as "new", "socialist" cities) are not the results of an organic development but were artificially created to facilitate contemporary political goals. The "inventors" therefore did not take into account any historic roots (if there were such), apart from their industrial history. In line with contemporary city planning practices, industrial cities either were built from scratch orwere built on the foundations of old towns or were created by merging smaller, insignificant municipalities. *(Weiner et al, 1959 via Wehner, 2007).*

From the moment of their appearance, new towns have been "synonymous with modernity" *(Germuska, 2004. p. 21.)* as well as being scenes facilitating the spread of socialist lifestyle. Carefully planned work and residential areas were built (often as greenfield investments), creating the socialist industrial town, which (among other things) served as a "monumental tool for propaganda" *(Germuska, 2004. p. 20.)*. As such, new towns generally received much more development resources from the state than traditional (industrial) towns.

Settlements can be divided into three groups by their type of development: (1) In Komló mining was further developed, while in

Ajka, Tatabánya, Ózd, Várpalota, the scope of already existing industry was extended. Industrialisation in Dunaújváros, Paks, Tiszaújváros and Százhalombatta was not based on historic industrial roots but was carried out on higher orders. The construction of Dunaújváros (Danube Ironworks) began as a completely greenfield project near two smaller municipalities which were later integrated, and this was also the case with Tiszaújváros (TVK). Here town and industry occupy the "same space", which significantly determines space utilisation. Industry was established as linked to the settlements (but not built seamlessly next to them) in Százhalombatta (Danube Refinery) and Paks (Paks Nuclear Power Plant), with some delay after the aforementioned two towns, in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Here, industry shaped the town's structure mainly through housing construction for the essential labour force, and through growing services.

### *The transformation of the urban structure*

An important symbolic step in the establishment of industrial towns was the raise of their ranks to township[2]: their elevation from municipality to town usually happened in the late 1940s and early 1950s when several smaller neighbouring settlements were integrated into the territory of the burgeoning towns[3]. The second step that could also be considered symbolic was the mass construction of new, modern housing estates. Contemporary politics viewed housing estates as a means of reducing inequality between

[2] In the socialist period the only municipalities given town status were those which played an important role in fulfilling national economic plans. As such, awarding town rank fulfilled a political role, since with it came a more favourable position in centralised redistribution. 8 of the 13 settlements uplifted to the rank of town between 1945 and 1960 were industrial townships. This eased in the 1970s and 1980s when a settlement did not have to industrialise to become a town (old towns and holiday resorts could also be granted this rank) (The number of cities also surged in the 1990s, and this growth has continued in the last two decades: according to statistics, there were 52 cities in Hungary in 1945, while in 1990 this number was 166, and 328 in 2015.)

[3] Settlements belonging to old towns were somewhat slower to be granted city status. This was often preceded by the merger of the old urban area and the so-called "new estates", or the administrative inclusion of outlying areas (Dombóvár only became a town in 1970, and Szentendre increased its territory in 1979 by absorbing its outskirts areas).

different social strata (among other things). Ideologists believed that environment can shape personality, so creating the socialist person requires the creation of a suitable socialist living environment. "The panel building system is now considered to be the primary element shaping the environment, and its role and importance will only grow. It is understandable, then, that the open or closed nature of the system, its orientation towards production, modularity and function can fundamentally affect our environment's shape, usability, and through these, the well-being of our society. (…) All this is still only consequence and a means. The end toward which this development must be implemented is to create spaces (both interior and exterior spaces) for social movements which can enable the massive spread of the socialist way of life." *(Barna, 1978, pp. 35-36.)*

Although new (industrial) towns were a showcase for socialism, the other reasons behind the construction of housing estates were the housing shortage, the increasing number of workers requiring housing, and the interests of prefabricated block manufacturers *(Szirmai, 1988)*. All this is clearly indicated by the fact that their construction was not limited to these areas only. The nationwide housing shortage required massive, rapid and if possible, cheap construction of compact urban housing. As a result more than 700,000 housing estate flats were built between 1945 and 1996. The construction of housing estates was accelerated by the spread of panel block technology. Between 1961 and 1992 a total of 507,870 panel flats were built (191,221 in Budapest and 316,649 elsewhere in the country) *(Tóth, 1996. p. 22.)*. The openly admitted goal was to settle down the majority of the population in modern housing estates with the improvement of the country's financial situation *(Pusztai, 1980)*.

The spread of these estates can be seen in the growth of the housing stock in the two town groups we examined. The construction of new towns already began in the 1950s, and after the decision to deploy industry, it was followed by the renovation of industrial facilities (or construction of new ones), along with the construction of modern housing estates suitable for their future employees. All power was concentrated on the construction of new (industrial) towns, which overshadowed the development of old towns. For this reason, housing stock built in this era only makes up 21.7% of the total in Kazincbarcika, and only 7% in Baja.

Table 30: Distribution of housing stock in 1989, by year of construction (%)

| | before 1919 | 1920-1944 | 1945-1959 | 1960-1989 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| new town | 3.0 | 4.1 | 21.0 | 71.8 |
| old town | 13.0 | 8.9 | 8.1 | 70.0 |

*Source: The author's own work edition based on CSO Statistical Yearbooks*

However, in Százhalombatta practically "nothing" was built in the 1950s, as the power plant's further development was only approved in the mid-1960s, so 18.7% of housing comes from the second half of the 1960s, and 47.8% from the 1970s. Looking at the period between 1960 and 1989 we can see no difference (this is due to delays in deploying heavy industry), as the housing stock built in both town groups in this period makes up 70% of the total *(see Table 30)*.

## *Population growth*

Large-scale housing construction was, naturally, associated with a significant population growth. Accordingly, the population of old towns grew at a lower rate than in new towns. The size ratio between the two town groups shrank from 2.7 in 1930 to 1.3 in the 1960s, and 1.1 in 1970, then stagnating until 1989. With this the difference in population sizes between the two groups vanished almost completely.

The structure of towns was drastically altered by industrial and housing projects. The intensity and the pattern of this transformation were different in the two town groups. The impact of strategic decisions by the socialist building industry was different in the two groups as well. This difference became apparent by the placement of housing estates within the urban structure, their numbers, and the size and composition of their population. All of these factors were significant in altering (or creating) the cityscape. In the case of new towns we can find examples for both cases. After World War II none of the settlements in this group had a functioning centre with urban characteristics (the centres of Várpalota and Paks, two towns with previous urban characteristics, were more or less destroyed in the war). In the case of other

settlements[4] the town was actually created through the construction of housing estates (e.g. in Dunaújváros, formerly Sztálinváros)[5], along with the majority of the urban structure, including the centre (for instance, in Ajka the building of housing estates in the city centre was started in the 1970s). Public institutions that also functionally transformed the settlement into a town and a service centre for neighbouring settlements were also built at that time (such as city councils, community centres, city hotels and department stores).

Old towns usually did not become "citadels" of socialist heavy industry[6]. Nevertheless, some industry was deployed along with housing estates in almost all of them. However, the historical urban structure was not significantly changed, with the historic centre often left intact. To some extent these towns were at a disadvantage in terms of development during the socialist period (as with e.g. Pápa), which turned to their advantage after the regime change.

The formation of the old towns' historic centres was practically completed in the 1930s. The most important public buildings of this era were village halls, industrial guilds, schools, churches, theatres, open-air baths and cafés. During the socialist period, a part of the old city centres fell victim to developments, and housing estates were built in the ring around the centre. Although the number of housing estates built in old towns was 1.6 times that of those built in new towns, the latter were much larger. As a result, in 1980 more than twice as many people lived in housing estates in new towns (55%) than in old towns (22%). Five towns were known to have more than 60% of their populations living in housing estates. *(Table 31)*

Beyond the new (industrial) cities and old towns there was an additional group where according to the plans and ideas, the establishment of the modern socialist way of life was facilitated by urban architectural instruments. As a resultof this, at the sites of

[4] As we have seen, a significant number of these settlements were created by pooling villages or through "greenfield" construction projects.

[5] During the socialist period, cities were often created entirely from scratch. In the area of the former Soviet Union 20 such cities were built every year on average *(Rubanenko, 1976)*.

[6] For instance, due to the deteriorating Soviet-Yugoslav relations, which led to weakened Hungarian-Yugoslav relations, Mohács "escaped" the deployment of the ironworks, and through this, from the socialist way of urban development.

Table 31: Five towns where the population of housing estates makes up more than 60% of the total population (1980)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Dunaújváros** | 90.0% | **Százhalombatta** | 65.6% |
| **Oroszlány** | 79.0% | **Komló** | 63.3% |
| **Tatabánya** | 65.9% | | |

*Source: CSO, 1980: p. 24*

derelict areas or even old civilian neighbourhoods housing estate projects were launched and industrial facilities grew out of the ground. These interventions brought about such significant changes into the former urban structure that deprived cities from their past urban structure resulting from their earlier organic development and created a distorted structure. All this was confirmed by the arguments of modernity: "The number of actual housing construction is considerably higher than the growth of housing stock. The large-scale housing construction in the last decade [the 1960s], urban planning, the demolition of obsolete residential homes created a large-scale housing demand which was satisfied by new, more streamlined, more responsive to needs housing stock." *(CSO, 1970, p. 3.)* These transformations for example virtually eliminated the historic city centre of Szolnok, the place was taken over by housing estates. Only a small part remained of the historic city centre of Székesfehérvár, which is surrounded by panel housing estates.

There are differences between the two groups not only in regard to the construction of housing estates but concerning the principles of housing allocation as well. According to the principles of housing allocation it is primarily those in need who should have been given flats in housing estates (blue-collar workers, people living in poor housing conditions and families with several children should have been given priority). However, practically, in the late 1960s and early 1960s families considered as important from certain aspects for the regime were provided housing estate flats in high proportion.

This is indicated by the 1980 census data as well. Of the active blue collar wage earners living in the housing estates of Budapest and in other Hungarian cities 52% were skilled workers, and from

white-collar wage earners 47.3% was the ratio of directors and managers. In non-housing estate urban areas the two rates were 59.4% and 38.1% *(CSO, 1980, p. 32.)*. Thus, it was not social situation, but rather "merits" which was one of the selection criteria in housing allocation *(Konrád–Szelényi, 1969)*. As a result, in 1980 intellectuals and other white collar workers lived in 1.5 times higher proportion in the housing estates of old towns than those of new towns.The two town groups therefore, started under differing circumstances and won development resources in a different degree during the period of socialism and, accordingly, faced the regime change with different heritage. That was the past, which created a significant difference between the two town groups and determined (restricted or even opened) more opportunities for them.

## The features of the transition period (1990–2014)

The end of the 20th century brought new challenges: cities had to deal with not only the trauma of the regime change but had to respond to impacts of globalisation, which became more and more perceivable. In the western and eastern parts of Europe the new towns' successful responses to the challenges were different along different dimensions. Those cities can regard themselves as successful, which have entered a new development path. On the one hand their economic structure transformed,shifting from traditional industries towards the service sector and the so-called new industries of which labour demand is more relevant to the younger population's, significantly increased educational attainment level in the last 20 years. On the other hand, they managed to stop the decline of citydwellers and the ageing of the population. Thirdly, the socio-spatial structure of the city has remained relatively stable *(Uzzoli, 2013)*. The studied town groups were not immune from global influences to which they could respond in the manner and context of their historical past. In the following sections these changes will be examined in economic and social dimensions.

### *Economic specificities*

The regime change has brought the disruption and the almost total breakdown of the socialist heavy industry. The privatisation of large state enterprises slowly, haltingly took place; the involvement of both domestic and foreign capital was particularly low in the new towns. In a short time hundreds of industrial jobs were lost, and as a result, the number of employees had dropped by 22% in new towns and by 15% in old towns by 2001.The difference was due to the fact that a significant part of the new town residents were blue collar labourers whose skills were such that after losing their jobs could usually find it difficult to find employment in other sectors. This is verified by the statistical data of census as well: between 1990 and 2001, the number of (physical) employees in agriculture, industry, construction and other trades in the new towns dropped by 46% and by 49% respectively in the old towns and the proportion of managers, intellectuals and other white collar employees decreased in new towns by 4%, and by 8% in old towns respectively.The decline therefore in both cases was a few percent higher in the old towns, but this was counterbalanced – in fact in total it was shifted towards higher employment numbers – by a significant increase in the number of service-employed workers: in old towns their number increased by 53%, in new cities by 35%. So after the start of the decay of the industrial sector, employees living in old towns having lost their jobs, had greater chances to find themselves a new job in the service sector than those living in new towns. Of course, this also suggests that in old towns building the service sector was faster, while in new towns the survival of the industrial sector and adaptation to the changed conditions were going on in this period; this can be an explanation for the smaller rate of job losses. The period between 2001 and 2010 did not bring a significant change; the number of employees remained close to the 2001 level.It seemed that the trauma following the regime change could be managed in both town groups and the number of employees has stabilised. However, the development progress was halted by the global economic crisis, which after 2008 significantly determined the fate of both old and new towns. One of the most visible consequences of the crisis was the dramatic increase of unemployment; however, this increase did not reach the levels experienced during the transition: while in the

country after 1990, nearly 1 million jobs were terminated[7], in 2008, this figure was only one-tenth of it, approximately.

The unemployment rate at national level rose between 2001-2005, stagnated in 2006-2007 thenat the end of 2008 it soared and rose from the value of 7.7% to 10.9% by 2011 *(MPH, 2012)* and then stagnated and once again fell back to 7.7% by 2014. In the case of new towns the national trend seems to be reflected[8], while the increase was smaller for old towns. Of course, this is (was) primarily in tight coherence with the difference in industrial structure.

In the new towns of the 1990s the average unemployment rate was 1.2-times higher than in old towns, then it started swinging up and down: in the first half of the 2000s, the difference was increasing and then decreasing (1.1) over the period of 2005-2007; it increased again in 2008 (1.3) and with the fading of the crisis it returned to the approximate level of 1.1. Secondly, the inherent entrepreneurial culture, the resumption techniques worked rather well for the inhabitants of old cities while in the new towns' workers these skills were less present. In addition, the state's assistance in saving large companies seemed to create a safe background for the future, which reduced the need for taking individual actions in the labour market.

These data also confirm that the two town groups went on different ways after the regime change. One of the main reasons for this was that the economic and political changes were not simultaneous in the two town groups the new towns the regime change was protracted or delayed. This is the reason why the city's economic transformation and adaptation to the new conditions started in a different form and pace.

It is no wonder that those towns that underwent economic structuring after the shock of regime change responded differently to the shock of the subsequent global economic crisis because rather those sectors were affected more severely, which in significant proportion were based on less qualified workers (but this is

[7] This included the large group of formerly part-time pensioners amounting to approx. one third of total unemployed. – According to the CSO data.

[8] The unemployment rate from the 6% in 2001 rose to 7.8% in 2008 and 9.9% by 2010 then was stagnating and returned to the 2008 level by 2014.

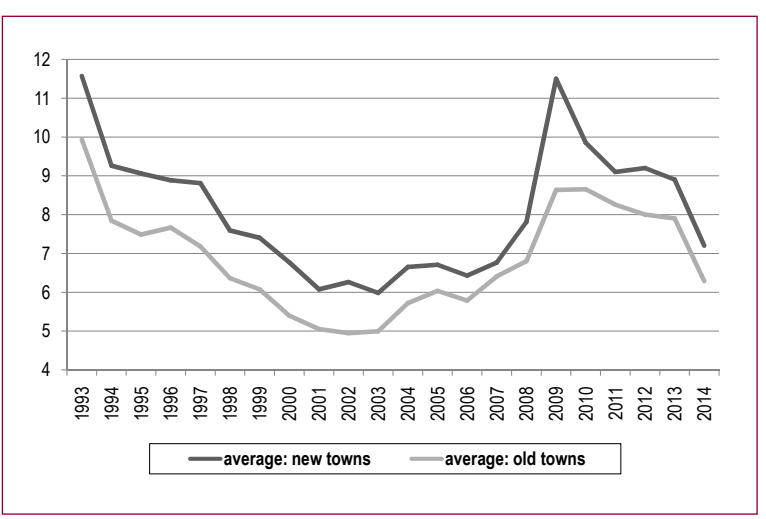
more typical for new towns). Consequently, blue collar and white collar workers were not equally affected by unemployment: within the circle of the registered unemployed the share of manual workers increased significantly.

Even in earlier periods, there was a significant difference between the quotient of the manual and intellectual jobless figures of the two town groups: in the old towns' group the number of blue collar workers within the registered unemployed in 2001 was three times, in the new towns' group 4.7 times higher than the number of white collar workers.

While in the old towns this ratio was almost unchanged between 2001-2008 and in the 2008-2014 period, it increased only slightly, then in new towns it decreased by 2003, was stagnating between 2004 and 2007 and then significantly increased from 2008 and in 2014 it approached the 2001 level. Thus, as a result of differences in occupational structure, the belated economic profile change is reflected in the chances of becoming jobless and its turning into persistent unemployment and significantly limits the manoeuvring scope of new towns.

All in all, in comparison to the regime change the impact of world economic crisis on unemployment and on the "strategy" of becoming jobless should be considered as different at certain

Figure 47: Unemployment rate (1993-2014) (%)




*Source: The author's own edition on the basis of CSO Statistical Information Database.*

points. While after the regime change a considerable part of the unemployed abandoned the labour market (by taking early retirement or going on disability pension or previously had been working as part-time pensioners), of those having lost their jobs as a consequence of the 2008 crisis only a few had the opportunity of doing so *(VMP, 2010)*.

After the regime change it is primarily the structural transformation of the economy that can be suspected behind the massive layoffs. It was mainly those groups of workers exposed to the crisis whose work could less be called as stable who were easy to be dismissed who worked at the company with fixed-term or temporary contract or were just hired *(VMP, 2010)*.

The impact of the crisis was the most noticeable in the towns or in regions which relatively well survived the post-transitional years: in places where the situation was bad even before 2008 with high unemployment, there was less (further) worsening than in those areas where either (once again) the industrial or the service sector was rising. This is indicated by the fact that while in 2008-2009 in the previously poor conditioned North Hungarian Region unemployment rate increased by 2.2 per cent, in the more prosperous Central Transdanubia region it rose from 5.8 to 10% *(VMP, 2010)*.

In both cases, it is the elderly and young entrants, including groups with low educational attainment and without professional qualification that have difficulties in finding a job;they have difficulties in returning back to the labour market *(VMP, 2010)*.Thus, it is the uneducated and the younger age groups that are hit significantly by the crisis. Over the past decade, the ratio of high-skilled workers has increased in the composition of the population by educational attainment, and the labour market's demand increased for skilled work of the same kind respectively.

One consequence of this is that for the educated it was relatively easy to get a job but on the other side those who could not join the training level improvement competition, got into a seriously disadvantageous position.

After the regime change with changes in the structure of education, with the mass appearance of young workers with tertiary education, the settling of firms replacing the former socialist industrial companies no longer employed unskilled labour but rather professionally qualified skilled workers and those with GCSE. With this the only option for the uneducated closed down

and it started to become clear that after the durable unemployment experienced after the regime change will last for a long time and breaking out of this will (would) be possible only by migrating to an area with greater demand for unskilled labour.

In addition, the settling-in foreign industrial (large) companies besides not absorbing unskilled labour have already diverted the most skilled employees of the region from – even domestic – enterprises. Foreign companies coming to Hungary – especially after 2005 – employ a staff with at least GCE certificate even if filling in the same position abroad does not require it. The reason for this is a positive relationship between the necessary flexibility and a higher level of education.Thus, the post-millennium trends indicate, that although the role of education has significantly changed, higher educational attainment does not automatically guarantee job opportunities. It has been shown that in most cases, it is not enough to retrain the uneducated, semi-skilled and unskilled workers, it is not enough to make them visit courses during the unemployment term because the acquired qualifications may not suit the required and in the given field sought qualifications or does not provide a useable certificate as employers – even besides vocational qualifications – would often welcome or require GCSE *(Csanádi et al, 2011)*.

### *Social specificities*

The economic restructuring had a significant impact on urban population growth, as well as on its occupational and demographic composition. The population change is a good indicator of the rise then of the decline of industry and of the manifestation of global impacts. The difference between the population figures of the two town groups was very significant in the period around the nineteenth century, the time of industrialisation: in 1870, 4.3 times, in 1900 3.6 times, in 1949 2.1 times as many people lived in the group of old towns than of the new.

The forced industrialisation of socialism, which strongly affected the new towns, was entailed by the settling in of population in significant number which resulted in analmost complete disappearance of difference between the two town groups by 1970. Later on this minimal difference, because of the global trend of urban population decrease, even further shrank and disappeared

by the year of 2014. The change was therefore launched by the practice of socialist urban development policy and was completed by the processes of the millennium; practically eliminating one of the significant differences between the two groups *(Table 32)*.

While during the socialist era the reduction in the gap was caused by the difference in intensity of population growth, long after the political changes it was the difference in population decline that became the main reason. In both groups the number of residential population started to decline but the larger population losses were accounted in the new towns: their population during twenty years shrank by 12%, whereas in the old towns the degree of decrease was only by 5%. (Of course, the dispersion of population decline in the town groups is significant: for the new towns the maximum decline was 22.6% while for the old towns it was 14.1%).

There is also a difference between the two groups in the trend of decline: the new towns had seen a slow decrease until 1996 and then it plummeted by 2014, which was broken by stagnation only in one year (2004) *(Figure 48)*. In contrast, the old towns show a slow downward trend line without any major breaks, which since 2003 has essentially become stagnant. *(Figure 48)*

The change in the population in a negative way, of course, means that births and immigrations cannot offset the decline caused by death and outmigration. The direction of the migration in the period 1990-2010 – as in the previous socialist period – was east-west. The winners of the internal migration were the advanced, and the losers were the less developed areas.

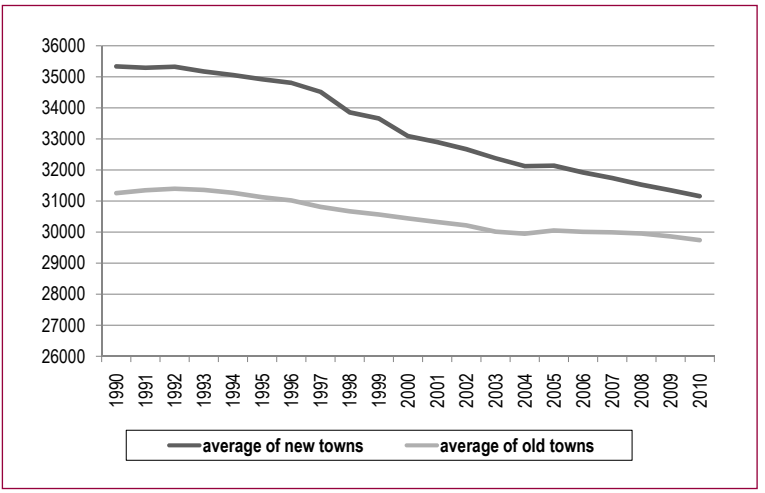
The population absorption power of Budapest slowly disappeared after the regime change and until 2006 the outmigration was the stronger factor. This was followed by stagnation, and a slight moving in surplus by 2010. The migration difference trend of

Table 32: The relative size of the old towns' permanent population compared to the group of new towns (1930-2014) (New cities = 1)

| 1930 | 1941 | 1949 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2001 | 2014 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2.7 | 2.5 | 2.1 | 1.3 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1.0 |

*Source: The author's own edition on the basis of CSO Census data.*

Figure 48: Changes in the permanent population of new and old towns (1990-2014) (people)




*Source: The author's own edition on the basis of Statistical Information Database*

villages moved in the opposite way: at first they were migration winners and then became losers *(Monostori et al, 2015)*.

New towns were facing significantly higher net migration loss than old towns, but the dynamism of loss was much more "hectic" than in the curve of permanent population figures. The new towns in the middle of the 1990s (1996-1998) significantly reduced their negative migration margin and for a short time they got near to the – collapsing at the beginning of the period, and only slowly improving – indexes of the old towns. Then around 1999 they again dropped to the level of high negative migration margin shown around 1994, and around 2002-2003 an even more significant deterioration was experienced.

The old towns during the same period produced an undulating curve with relatively small amplitudes, then from 2003 to 2008 a significantly positive trend can be observed. At the end of the research period the increasingly more positive trend of old towns was followed by new towns with a three to four year delay: their average negative migration margin was significantly reduced even if they did not succeed in getting into the positive range.

The underlying reasons may be diverse, of which one of the most powerful ones is the impact of the for a short time rising and then falling industrial production in new towns on manpower demand.

In the old towns these fluctuations are smaller. This is partly because there were no changes demanding such large-scale changes in manpower during the booming and declining periods.

## *Ageing society*

The decline in urban population is closely linked to the ageing population, which is not a unique post-socialist phenomenon, but a trend[9] that is characteristic for developed countries which in the last decade is more and more strongly felt in Hungary as well. In the European Union statistics – unlike in the one used here – old age category is starting not from the age of 60, but 65.

The proportion of the population aged 65 and over in the EU-27 in 2010 was 17.4%, and according to preliminary calculations in 2050 it will increase to 28.8% and then to 30% by 2060. In Hungary, the ageing of society and within this of communities has accelerated after the regime change: the proportion of the population aged 65 increased from the 13.2% in 1990 to 17.5% in 2014.

According to the projection of researchers of demography by 2050 their ratio will increase to 29.4% by 2050 and to 31.9% in 2060 *(Monostori, 2015).*There areseveral statistical indices and indexes to monitor the changes of ageing processes beyond the ratio of 60 or 65 years and older population, of which we are going to use the ageing index, now, the value of which in Hungary rose from 64.5% in 1990 to 123.6% in 2014, strongly indicating the dominance of the elderly.

The socialist new towns even at the regime change had a surplus of as many young people, which kept the value of this index relatively low (59%). In contrast, old cities had relatively old population even in 1990, with the 94.4% value of ageing index. At that time the difference in ageing index between the two town groups was 1.6 times, which twenty years later decreased to 1.1-fold in 2014, in such a way that both town group's index rose sharply. The new cities'ageing index increased to 176.8% and that of the old cities to 190.9%.

[9] The age structure of society is in change, and the proportion of the elderly will grow at an increasing speed in the future. The meaning of the term old will get a different interpretation as with the delaying of retirement, and with childbearing at a later age the length and interrelationship of life stages will also change.

The new towns thus lost their former advantages, the image of a young city able to employ many active aged, and entered the row of rapidly ageing cities. Ageing thus in both town groups is a phenomenon which in the coming years is increasingly necessary to deal with, and it raises the necessity of strengthening the social network and services as well as to prevent the massive social impoverishment of the elderly.

### *The transformation of spatial and social structure*

After the regime change the former social-spatial structure has undergone a rapid transformation, which resulted in the exodus, the ageing population, rising unemployment, on the one hand, and new housing constructions and simultaneously the decreasing value of housing estates on the other hand. By the mid-1990s state housing constructions, the building of housing estates under socialist mega investment projects gradually ceased. Within this, mainly the markets of major housing investments dropped to a minimum level for nearly ten years, but following the millennium as a result of the growing investor interest housing construction started again with the construction of block type flats. The number of newly built homes fell significantly in both town groups between 1990 and 1993. In old cities it started to increase again in 1994, and the pace of construction stagnated around the millennium. In new towns the number of homes started to rise again since 1996. Over the next decade in both urban groups – following the housing market boom – for some time the number of homes built increased; the growth was higher in the old towns than in the new towns.

However, after 2008, as a result of the crisis-effects housing construction fell back approximately to the 1992 level. Overall, in the group of old towns between 1990 and 2000 2.4 times, from 2001 to 2010 1.5 times as many homes were built as in the new towns during the total period, this means a 1.8-fold difference.

Thus, it seems that the housing market underwent a significant change after the political change,and in the studied cities the new, coveted, modern forms of architecture also appeared: large family houses and condominium apartments. The intensity of building was higher in the case of old cities, and by 2011 the differences between the numbers of homes had levelled out between the two groups: in both groups more than 140.000 apartments were built.

The composition of homes by the number of rooms was more favourable in the group of old towns, since the ratio of 3-roomed or more than 3-roomed apartments is much higher (53%, compared to 36%). Similarly to the housing estates built previously under socialist mega projects, these new forms of construction contributed to changes in the urban spatial and social structure, though,due to their size and their positions in the urban structure, they were less significant.

The lack of rental housing, which is rooted in housing privatisation, but inseparable from the construction of new homes establishing the real estate market boom – more and more often emerging in professional discourses – is a more and more urgent problem. However, during housing privatisation[10] only 15% of the rental housing stock was privatised between 1980 and 1990.

In 1990, with the Local Government Act–as it transferred the formerly state-owned flats under the jurisdiction of municipalities – and with the 1993 Housing Act[11] – which regulated the leasing and disposal of flats – this process soared.

By 2001 80% of the 1990 housing stock went over into the hands of the new owner, and thus, a significant part of the public housing property was sold. The remaining housing stock generally consisted of low-comfort flats in the worst parts of the place; however, after 2001 24% was still purchased.

In 2011, on national level, the number of public rental housing only slightly exceeded 100,000. Behind the surge of purchases wasnot only the desire for private property, but some indirect coercion because the tenants due to the precarious situation feared that the government in the near future, may increase rent fees drastically; therefore collecting all their financial resources they rather bought their apartments *(Farkas–Vajda–Vita, 1997)*.

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[10] The history of privatisation process in Hungary dates back to 1969: it was the year of passing a government decree, which allowed the privatisation of less than 12 apartment buildings.However, at that time it had no significant effect on the ownership structure. According to the 1970 and 1980 census, 25-26% of the country's housing stock was public rental housing (This meant approx. 800,000 flats in 1970, and slightly more than 860,000 homes in 1990). By the early 1980s the limit of 12 flats was abolished, and thus the way opened to a genuine privatisation (Hegedűs-Tosics, 1996).

[11] 1993 LXXVIII. Act. Until 30 November 1995 only the resident tenants of the apartment had the opportunity to purchase it, but later on this restriction was also abolished.

Following the privatisation, thus the ownership structure of the country's housing stock has changed significantly: while in 1980 25% of the apartments were owned by municipalities, this proportion reduced to 19% by 1990, then in 2001 fell to 3.7% and by 2014 shrank further (2.9%).

The reduction in the number of public rental housing in both town groups took a swing after 1990 and by 2013 fell to 4.5% in new towns, and 3.7% in the old towns.

Investment spirit therefore significantly rose between 2004 and 2008: investments were targeted mainly at gated communities and newly built condominiums attached to downtown rehabilitation projects which have become a marketform of mass housing construction. The quickly rising migration spirit due to the favourable credit facilities has resulted in greater mobility. Although there is a great demand for the new form of housing, moving to a new apartment can be afforded by only a fraction; a much larger proportion of home buyers purchase used flats and very high, one-third is the proportion of those who changed their flats without purchase.

Presumably mobile population moved towards the more prosperous parts of settlements, to newly built homes and to the suburbs from the panel housing estates. Panel housing estates can still be purchased relatively cheaply, although their maintenance incurs high costs. Due to the retreat of housing investments after the 2008 crisis, the shortage of housing loans for young people living independently is becoming more and more difficult.

Increasing the number of rented homes could be a significant help in starting a new life, or in selecting an adequate housing for family growth. In both town groups the rental housing market is taking over the function of public rental housing only with difficulties and slowly.

### *The impacts on urban policy*

During this period, settlements belonging to the group of new towns received a total of 3,333 times support (303 units per settlement), with 55.4% of domestic resources. Old towns received 1.6 times as much support (5,261 units, an average of 478/settlement), of which 59.4% were from domestic resources.

The difference in the intensity of support suggests that old cities on the one hand were more reliant on writing proposals, since the

development of the city could not get money from other sources. In contrast, new towns and by making agreements with actors of industry and foreign investors had better chances for accessing those resources that contributed to the city's development. On the other hand, in the case of old cities more intellectual capital was available for lobbying and writing applications. Old cities were also in a better position in the 2007-2012 period: they received funding under 1.8 times more from EU projects than new cities (1988 pcs). The amount of support awarded is also much higher, it was 2.2 times more in the case of old cities and the contracted amount was also slightly higher (97% of the amount awarded, in contrast to the new towns' 91%). Both town groups are equal in terms that only 72% of the projects awarded has been implemented.

These data mostly show tender activities and their success. Old cities were in a better position, not only because they won more tenders, but also because they could spend larger sums for development.

The urban development parts of applications have made it possible for a significant part of city managers and planners to work on projects, which (can) transform significantly for a shorter or longer term the cityscape, the use of city and often the social composition as well. Among the proposals there were calls for urban rehabilitation activities, which can also mean a breakthrough in the current rehabilitation practice[12], the more so, because the implementation of functions expanding rehabilitation (popular among cities) has been linked together by the implementation of a social urban rehabilitation project *(Kézikönyv, 2009)*.

Every town has a to some extent deteriorated part (so-called crisis area) or segregated zone where the largest proportion of Roma live; improving their social situation is one of the key priorities of social urban rehabilitation projects. The proportion of

[12] It is because in the previous period it was almost exclusively the market investors who were able to ensure a relatively significant source for urban development. However, their special interests are necessarily such that for all of the goodwill of local decision-making and urban planning – according to many sociological studies – this would result in the removal of low-status population from the rehabilitation area. This process might even bring success for certain local authorities, but as the problem is "exported" on the one hand, it is not a real solution, on the other hand, it is likely to result in accumulating more serious, more expensively manageable tensions in the country as a whole.

Roma within the total population is currently available only in the 2011 census data.

It is well known that these figures significantly underestimate the Roma population. Despite this, they can give at least some view on the magnitude of differences between town groups and towns. The proportion of Roma population in new towns is 1.6 times higher (3.6%) than in old towns (2.2%).

As a result of the EU regulation, on the one hand, housing estates, on the other hand degraded urban areas are included in the Integrated Urban Development Strategy of several towns as an action area on which they intend to perform in the near future some kind of rehabilitation (or have already done it).

### *Regional roles*

These settlements have already had some kind of regional organisation power under the socialist regime. Until 2012 the members of both town groups – with the exception of Százhalombatta – were micro-regional centres[13]. In this capacity they were the major employers, health service and educational centres of their area (or even their micro-region) and the venues of shopping and various services.

The complexity of these functional relationships and their functioning significantly affects how easy it is to get from one settlement to another. This is influenced by the fact how the studied city can perform its central functional roles and in the given case how the neighbouring settlements' residential and recreational functions can be connected to the settlement performing central role.

This relationship was examined by (not independent of regional conditions) road accessibility. Between the two town groups there is no significant difference in the number of surrounding villages accessible by road in half an hour: both groups have an average of 41-42 settlements located in the surroundings of the studied towns *(Figure 49)*. However, due to the differences[14] in

[13] Although since 1 January 2013 the micro-regional system has been replaced by the former district system. However, data are not yet available on the effect this change will have on suburban connections.

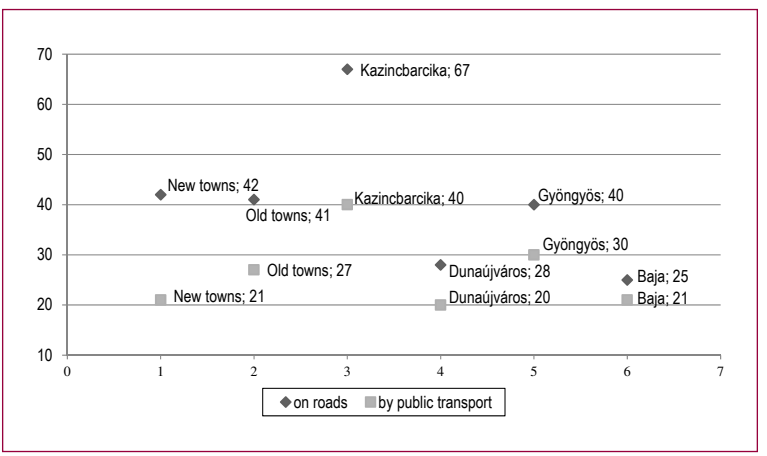
[14] Natural geographical feature: riverside–hillside location. Settlement geographical feature: small-sized Transdanubian–greater sized Great Plain settlement area.

their physical and settlement geographical features there were significant differences within each group.

The most significant difference is found in the accessibility of public transport: the integration index[15] of public transport is about a quarter higher in the old towns (63) than in the new ones (51). This means that in inter-settlement relations organic development has created more intense, more established systems than those created in the new towns where among others the establishment of a central city role was also an essential part of the explicit goals of urban development.

It should also be observed that from this point of view new towns show a more homogenous picture than the old towns[16], which had run a traditional development path. The geographical and historical heritage in the old towns play a greater role (see for example the

Figure 49: Transport integration in old and new towns (2012) (minutes)




*Source: The author's own calculation on the basis of KSH T-STAR database*

[15] The public transport integration index is a ratio of the number of municipalities accessible by public transport in a given period of time compared to the number of all municipalities accessible by public transport during the same time period. This can be expressed by the formula as follows:
PTINT30 =100*PTNUM30/TNUM30
Where PTINT is the index of the respective time interval (Public transport integration at defined time-level), PTNUM and TNUM represent the corresponding case numbers indicating the number of settlements accessible by public transport and by road within a given period of time.

[16] The variance of PTINT indicator in new towns is only about two-thirds (233) of the one experienced in old towns (328), i.e. old towns are more heterogeneous in this respect.

case of Szentendre) than in the new ones, where one can face the consequences of a conscious – often rather forced – development.

The operability of central function hereinafter is worth exploring in the context of jobs (employment and the number of businesses), services and the role in the health care system. The disintegration of industry after the regime change occurred not all at once, and not to the same extent in the studied town groups. New towns were hoping for a longer time that heavy industry does not disappear completely, but it – or at least some of its parts – will further be run by state or private investors.

As the case studies of this book indicate, the transition was not easy, maintaining industrial jobs involved ownership changes which brought about the arising of several conflicts, and still one cannot be sure whether the given industrial sector in the coming years will provide secure livelihood for the local employees.

The data indicate that in the new towns industrial jobs in 2001 were able to maintain their leading role: the share of employment in the aggregated statistics of industry and construction was 47.6%, compared to the one-third in the old towns. The share of employed in the service sector accordingly was larger in old towns; 64.6%, compared to 51% in the new towns.

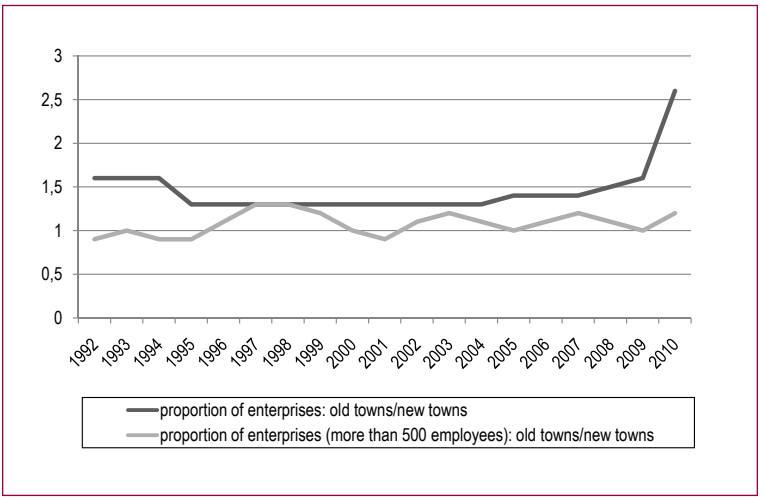
The globalised world put new industries in place of the old ones – including the so-called creative industries – and the establishment of this new type of industrial production was facilitated in all settlements by the construction of industrial parks. In this respect there are no differences between the two town groups.

In all towns at least one industrial park was established. Only a few towns were in the fortunate position that larger enterprises continued their previous industrial activity, in several towns smaller enterprises have become the employers of the local population.

The Central Statistical Office's data are less suitable to verify[17] this, but it is worth seeing how the number of businesses changed

[17] The Central Statistical Office's collection and communication of the number of businesses under varying conditions for certain years limits the possibilities of the analysis and comparison of clustered data. (For example, until 1998 the CSO communicated the total number of operating and then of registered enterprises in different size groups: until 1990 enterprises with 300 and more people, and from 1999 businesses with 250 and more employees and later on with a staff of 500 or more belong to the highest category.) Because of the many uncertainties we selected this simple form of analysis.

Figure 50: The proportion of enterprises in new and old towns (1992-2010) (%)




*Source: The author's own edition based on CSO Statistical Information Database*

in the 1990s and in the post-millennium period because the problems with data do not make the comparison between town groups unrealistic. Between the two town groups in terms of the number of businesses there were larger differences in the 1990s.

In both cases, their number steadily declined, but in the old towns' group there were significantly more (1.6 times) until 1995, and then only slightly more (1.3 times) operating businesses *(Figure 50)*. This difference remained constant until 2004 and then until 2010 increased to 2.6-fold. It seems that the group of enterprises in the new towns were more strongly hit by the economic crisis; at the end of this decade the number of registered enterprises in this group decreased, while in the group of old towns it was even slightly increasing.

This, of course, can be explained by the increase in the number of forced businesses, which, however, at the same time, can be taken as a kind of response which under the circumstances of the old towns' more embedded entrepreneurial traditions can be a better choice than in the case of new towns.

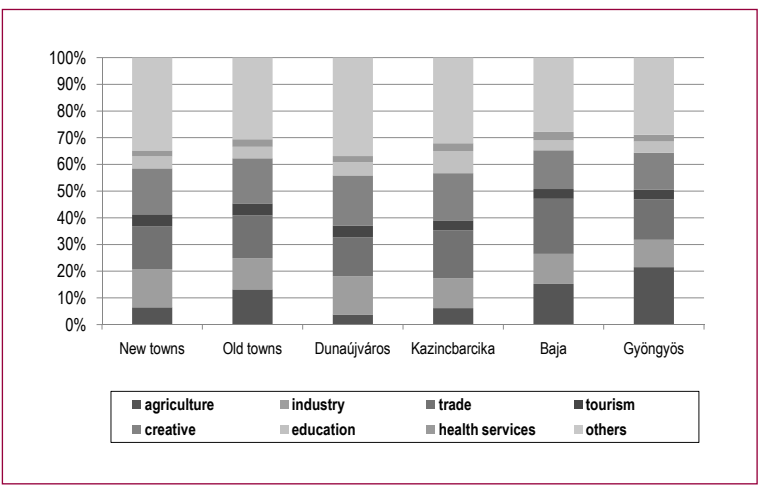
This effect can be eliminated to some extent if we examine the large businesses' relationship figures between the two town groups. The numbers ranged from 0.9-1.7, and this indicates that in new towns, although with smaller fluctuations, but there were

more large (with over 250 employees) businesses during almost the whole research period. We have data on the number of registered enterprises employing more than 500 people covering only the last few years, but it also indicates that really big companies have settled in larger number in the new towns than in the old ones. This figure by 2014 decreased to 25 and 11, which in turn means that some large businesses operating in the new towns were more sensitive to the crisis.

The heavy industrial past, or its absence thereof even twenty years after the regime change limits and determines the direction a settlement's economy could develop and also how much benefit it can draw from it. The regional dimension proved to have stronger influence than the new-old town dimension. *(Károlyi, 2011)* A further analysis on the type of businesses should reveal what the trends are in 2014, in the business profiles inthe field of agriculture, industry and services *(Figure 51)*.

In the industrial sector[18] they show the same proportions as seen above: the ratio of the proportion of businesses profiled in the

Figure 51: The proportion of business sectors within the total of businesses (2014)




*Source: The author's own edition based on CSO Statistical Information Database*

[18] Mining, quarrying, manufacturing, electricity, gas, steam supply, air conditioning, water supply, sewage treatment, waste management and remediation activities, construction.

industrial sector was higher in new towns in 2014 (13.9%) than in the old towns (11.3%), while the proportion of enterprises engaged in agriculture was 1.7 times higher in the latter ones (14.9%).

The local residents and the population of surrounding settlements often go shopping into the regional centre which means a relatively high solvent demand. There was no difference between the town groups inthe proportion of commercial enterprises (13-13%) in 2014. There was neither any difference in offers: in both groups 116 stores were counted, and the figures of hypermarkets were also similar (14 to 12 in new and old towns respectively).

Public and higher education institutions play a very important role in the life of small towns and cities. The central function can be detected along this dimension as well, and the proportion of non-resident students per local students shows significant differences between the two town groups: in the new towns it is 22.7% while in the old towns it is considerably higher, 35.5%.

Inthe 21st century tourism is one of the leading sectors, which for many – mainly rural, small – towns may arise as an opportunity to break out from crisis. With the emergence of the European Union's funds those tenders have also been announced that support the strengthening of countryside and rural tourism. Under this framework a lot of rural towns have opened a spa, wellness centre or a waterpark: two in new towns and three in old towns. In 2014 the proportion of registered enterprises specialised in tourism and catering industry was 4.3-4.4% (the two new towns with near average and the other two towns with slightly below average ratios 3.5-3.6%) in both town groups. In new (industrial) cities a special, and today more and more fashionable branch of tourism may also appear; it is visiting run-down factories and their attached housing estates[19].

Therefore, with regard to the central role, there is no significant difference between the two town groups, although the members of the old towns' group are more accessible, the agglomeration settlements are more integrated from the aspects of public transportation. In the new towns' group the share of industrial and

[19] Some of the former socialist industrial towns in recent times have become a tourist destination especially for young people visiting from the US and Western Europe: Nowa Huta, Poruba, Eisenhüttenstadt and Dunaújváros.

large companies is still significant within the business sector. In the old towns the share of agricultural enterprises is more significant.

In other areas there is no significant difference between the groups, but there might be some on the level of individual municipalities. Within the service sector, there is not any difference between the two groups either in the number of businesses operating in trade, education and health care. However, there is difference between them in the amount of external funds awarded for urban development: in this field the old towns' group performs much better.

## Conclusions

This chapter has revealed the differences between the development paths and the different adaptation strategies of the socialist new towns' and old towns' group. It is an important finding, that the transformations in the urban structure of the last more than 100 years can be divided into three major periods: industrialisation in the late nineteenth century, the socialist (partly forced) industrialisation (with the construction of attached housing estates), and post-transition development period. In the first period the still in use city centres of traditional towns were built with those public buildings that still fulfil their original functions.

In addition, those industries had developed which the socialist planned economy was built on later. Under socialism, the settling of industry and the construction of panel housing estates significantly transformed the former structure, and (particularly in new towns) the constraints created by central directives have created distorted urban structures instead of organic urban development. The arrival of "freedom" after the regime change could introduce or could have introduced a practice of urban development being similar to that of in western democracies.

The analysis has confirmed that there are historically determined differences between the two town groups. A group of old towns in terms of population composition and functions went through the classical urban development path from the 1800s onwards. The impacts of socialist planned economy on urban structure and society could change this progress only by slowing down the process of development.These towns with more or less

delay were able to adapt to changing circumstances, even after the change of regime. The new townshad no historical origins, they were created by the socialist industrialisation policy; a considerable proportion of them previously existed only as adjacent villages on the map of the country. A significant part of attention and resources were focused on these towns for some decades which resulted in their unconventional urban structure and a growing population number.

After the regime with the cessation of heavy industry these towns were in the worst position, they suffered the greatest trauma. The attempt of foreign investors,arriving from the mid-1990s, to maintain the former activities in a certain sense and degree was not successful on the long run. The prosperity of the early 2000s was felt in every town but the global economic crisis had its impact on these towns to various extents. In this case the difference pre-dominantly was seen not between the two town groups but rather between individual municipalities.In general, it can be said that municipalities facing more serious trauma at the regime change have become more adaptable than those having suffered less trauma. Both town groups have towns that are more adaptable and more successful and there are also some that proved to be less successful *(Table 33)*.

The first (advanced) group contains only three new towns; towns where industry as a greenfield investment settled in next to a small village (Paks, Százhalombatta, Tiszaújváros) developing it into a major industrial town. However, Dunaújváros, which both by its history and development policy belongs to the above three towns, has been put among stagnant cities. In addition, four cities have been here, which can be divided into two groups.

The first group consists of those where modern industry has already been built in the second half of the 1800s (Ajka: glass factory, krypton factory) or had civilian origin (Várpalota). The other group's members are those towns where the main profile was coal mining (Oroszlány and Tatabánya), which at the time of regime change almost immediately decayed and therefore these towns were forced to carry out a profile change at once. The capital city's proximity, the extension of its metropolitan agglomeration, the logistics industry, which found the optimal location between Budapest, Győr and Tatabánya have played an increasingly important role in improving the situation of these towns in recent years.

Table 33: The categorisation of the two town groups' members by the degree of development[20]

| | Advanced | Stagnant | Declining |
|---|---|---|---|
| New towns | Paks, Százhalombatta, Tiszaújváros | Ajka, Dunaújváros, Oroszlány, Tatabánya, Várpalota | Kazincbarcika, Komló,Ózd |
| Old towns | Esztergom, Szentendre | Baja, Eger, Pápa, Szekszárd, Tata | Dombóvár, Gyöngyös, Mezőkövesd, Mohács |

*Source: Edited by P. Baji based on CSO T-STAR database 75 and CSO complex index*

There are three new towns (Kazincbarcika, Komló, Ózd) among the declining ones, they are the least able to break out of their current situation.In these towns the industry was based on mining, with links to some manufacturing industry (power plants, steel production, chemical combine). After the regime change manufacturing industry was not completely shut down, although the loss of jobs was significant; however, the global economic crisis brought another trauma, further weakening industrial production. Of the old cities thetwo smaller ones with some spectacular special functions (art, tourism, and religion) have become successful.

The stagnant town group includes towns with various backgrounds; some of them are "pulled up" by the capital city's proximity (Eger, Tata), some of them are kept on the surface by their strong central role (Baja, Pápa, Szekszárd).

The declining group has four old towns, their today's situation goes back to their history: Mohács because of its frontier zone situation can get rid of its past with difficulties. The position of Gyöngyös among traditional towns is limited by its strong industrial past because industrial restructuring was delayed and due to this it has fallen behind in the race with the surrounding settle-

[20] Data grouping was done by Peter Baji using the following method: The specific indicators in towns were transformed to an ordinal scale where the best indicator was put on the 1st, and the worst was put on the 11th place, and then these were averaged. Both his own and the CSO index led to the same result.

ments. Dombóvár and Mezőkövesd in the proximity of several other important central settlements can find their own place only with difficulties.

It seems that the urban development process significantly limits the ways and possibilities a town can respond to the crisis and that may determine its further development. This is indicated by the fact that out of the new towns two with traditional small town roots developing into socialist industrial towns became prosperous, (Paks advanced, and Várpalota stagnant).Those towns that had significant industry and virtually no urban pastwere established asgreenfield investments; they were also able to be more successful because they managed to utilise their strong socialist heritage. The towns going through a hybrid, interrupted or stalled development path were less successful. In their case the situation awareness and the rapid response capacity of the post-transitional town leaders had greater role in success.

This is because the transformation of towns was greatly influenced by how much capital investors direct(ed) in the area, what industrial and service establishments, what kind of homes are built, and what urban planning interventions are planned and implemented. In addition, how wisely city officials and local economic operators were able to utilise the EU and national forms of support during the past almost 10 years and to what extent they were able to exploit them.

# Urban Structures and Architectural Specificities in the Post-Socialist New Towns

Kornélia Kissfazekas

## Introduction

During the formulation of new towns' urban planning principles, ideological and professional expectations were both present. The political leadership expected these settlements to reflect the new social order in their form and spatial arrangement while planning them along new paradigms provided rarely seen grandiose opportunities for urban planners. As such, the actors of planning, the creators and the decision-makers were committed to creating something new.

These towns are important witnesses to the socialist period's regional and urban planning policy, as well as of its ideas about professional policy. We can therefore assume that they were "ideal" model cities of contemporary society, being experiments in social and urban planning. This is partly true; however, their construction was fundamentally influenced by production and operational aspects, and financial constraints, which often overwrote ideological expectations. Urban planning ideas were therefore not fully met. Buildings of production and housing enjoyed priority, at times delaying the construction of higher-level service facilities and representational architecture by several years. Plans were therefore often far removed from reality.

The study has been realised within the confines of the research entitled "Social Polarisation in the Hungarian and Eastern-Central European 'New Town' Regions: Impacts of Transition and Globalisation" (K 106169), funded by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office.

Planners created plenty of plans that in the end never materialised, while aiming to express the spatial formations of the socialist city. They paid special attention to the city centre's location and the details of its urban composition. At the same time these parts were the ones that were delayed the most or in many cases, entirely omitted. Ideas of composition and spatial organisation could often only come to fruition fully in residential areas that were laid out next to each other, each with its unique spatial arrangement and architectural character.

Soviet city planning principles were intended as guidelines[1] for socialist countries. We can therefore ask: are there any common features of Central and Eastern European new towns? Did general expectations present at the time of planning produce typical situations and repeat schematic solutions? How were rigorously prescribed principles of architecture applied, and can their traces be found in today's cities? And finally, does the new town model show any radically different features when compared to traditional historic towns in terms of spatial organisation and urban planning?

This chapter aims to present the architectural and urban planning features of state socialist new towns, comparing past planning ideas with current reality. The study analyses six model cities, each different in its spatial spread, size and population while focusing on closely related urban characteristics that were declared as important elements of a new town at the time of planning. These are: the structure of the city, the city centre (its place, functional role, composition, the planning of architecture and public spaces), as well as issues of urban identity.[2]

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[1] See for example the Bolshaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya's instructions for town building; In: *Településtudományi Közlemények,* April 1953. pp. 165-179. Építőipari, Műszaki Egyetem Városépítési Tanszéke. Bolshaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya was a grandiose series of encyclopaedias created to summarise the soviet state's new worldview. It was published from 1926 to 1947 in 65 volumes, and republished several times afterwards.

[2] „...The socialist town's design and construction is not only a technical and economic problem (it is much more than that), the socialist town must express the strength and perspective of socialist society, and must provide a framework that is worthy in its appearance for the people of the socialist era. Only those cities can fully meet the concept of the beautiful city, which take the natural environment into account, which are built in accordance with a uniform spatial composition, which have a strong spatial structure, an active silhouette and a city centre." *(Perényi, 1952, p. 3.)*

## General aspects of planning

### *Initial expectations, planning principles*

The state socialist period paid close attention to urban architecture-related issues. In contemporary professional press[3] one can clearly trace changes in political priorities and paradigm shifts.

It has been clear since new towns began to be built that their final goal is very practical (creating the conditions for production and ensuring habitation for the workers as soon as possible) but enforcing ideologically motivated aspects of form and aesthetics was also a fundamental requirement. A repeatedly expressed desire was that planners should treat the city as a work of art and the new town should express the democratic nature of socialist order in its content and function. To this end all of its parts had to be built to have the same quality[4]. *(Perényi, 1955; Prakfalvi–Szücs, 2010)* The issue of the city centre had a peculiar role in contemporary rhetoric, as it was difficult to reconcile with the previously mentioned idea of the urban corpus having a singular nature. *(Prakfalvi–Szücs, 2010)*.

Formal issues of composition played a prominent role in the 1950s, which was when the initial stage of state socialist new towns' construction took place. During the building of Hungarian new towns, creating detailed zoning and development plan took place at the same time as the creation of the overall urban planning concept. Many so-called urban compositional plans were also made, which could clearly and spectacularly present to lay people the urban architectural features and elements that were thought to be important at the time. The task of compositional plans was to illustrate the settlement's creation, its harmony with the landscape, and the mutual relationship between landscape and cityscape *(Faragó, 1984)*. It also had to illustrate the city's spatial shaping, and vertically or otherwise accentuated features that would affect the cityscape. Compositional plans had a good effect

[3] In Hungary these are e.g. *Városépítés, Településtudományi Közlemények, Magyar Építőművészet,* and in *Czechoslovakia Architektura CSR*.

[4] „Soviet city building opens up limitless opportunities for architecture in the creation of districts and entire cities that are coherent and ideologically expressive", said the previously quoted Bolshaya Sovetskaya, p. 167.

on zoning plans as they brought forth aesthetic considerations as well instead of only focusing on the usage of schematic buildings dictated by pragmatic sensibilities. *(Peregi, 1975)*. Chief among structural and formal requirements were a representative, broad thoroughfare that would provide space for public events, and a need for symbolic high-rise buildings in city centres *(Bonta, 2008)*. However, from 1957 onwards creating urban compositional plans was no longer compulsory. This is evidenced by the fact that the need for representative elements in the cityscape took a back seat even in planning *(Körner–Nagy, 2006)*.

Urban scale building plans were not only characterised by formalism. The idea was to use them to realise city-building aspirations and organisational principles that were based on the Athens Charter's concepts, which were seen as justified based on seeing other European new town construction projects in practice. The 'Városrendezési Normák' (City Planning Standards) published in 1951 also codified this *(Faragó, 1984; Perényi, 1988)*. Its ideas were practical, functionally divided land use, a well thought-out transportation network, advanced service structures, extensive development of public utilities, and breaking up constructed areas with green spaces. It became a fundamental requirement in modern structural planning to apply zoning principles, breaking up the city into functional areas (residential, industrial, and green areas), and into transport area units *(Körner–Nagy, 2006)*. The basic unit of organisation and planning was chosen to be the micro-rayon (or micro-district) with basic service structures in its centre (these were typically schools). These units were organised into neighbourhoods, and neighbourhoods into residential zones. However, "planners' plans called for constructing residential buildings and neighbourhoods so large that they were not adequately provided with services on a city level" *(Węcławowicz, 1992)*. Some researchers therefore point out the planned uniformity of architecture and inadequate institutional coverage of large areas as one of the most important differences between the socialist and the capitalist city type.

## *Value systems and changes in attitude*

Functional planning "with its rational spatial arrangement of functions, however, could not satisfy the need for emotional order" *(Paksy, 1988)*. From the second half of the 1960s there had been

increasingly stronger critical analyses that examined settlements not only from aspects of function, form or physicality but in a holistic manner, also taking social science aspects into account *(Faragó, 1984)*. There had been critical remarks suggesting that zoning, functional separation, institutional hierarchy, and treating residential zones as closed systems are incorrect principles for urban planning *(Kőszegfalvy, 1967)*. However, Hungarian policy continued to stand by these principles even in 1970 *(Perényi, 1970a)*. "Our perception had to be slightly revised", wrote Imre Perényi[5] much later, representing the official position, while also suggesting the need for a more flexible system for organising residential areas where units are not completely spatially separated, self-sufficient and monofunctional. This flexibility would enable linear or block arrangements or a mixture of the two *(Perényi, 1988)*. With this, Perényi revised his previous views on zoning.

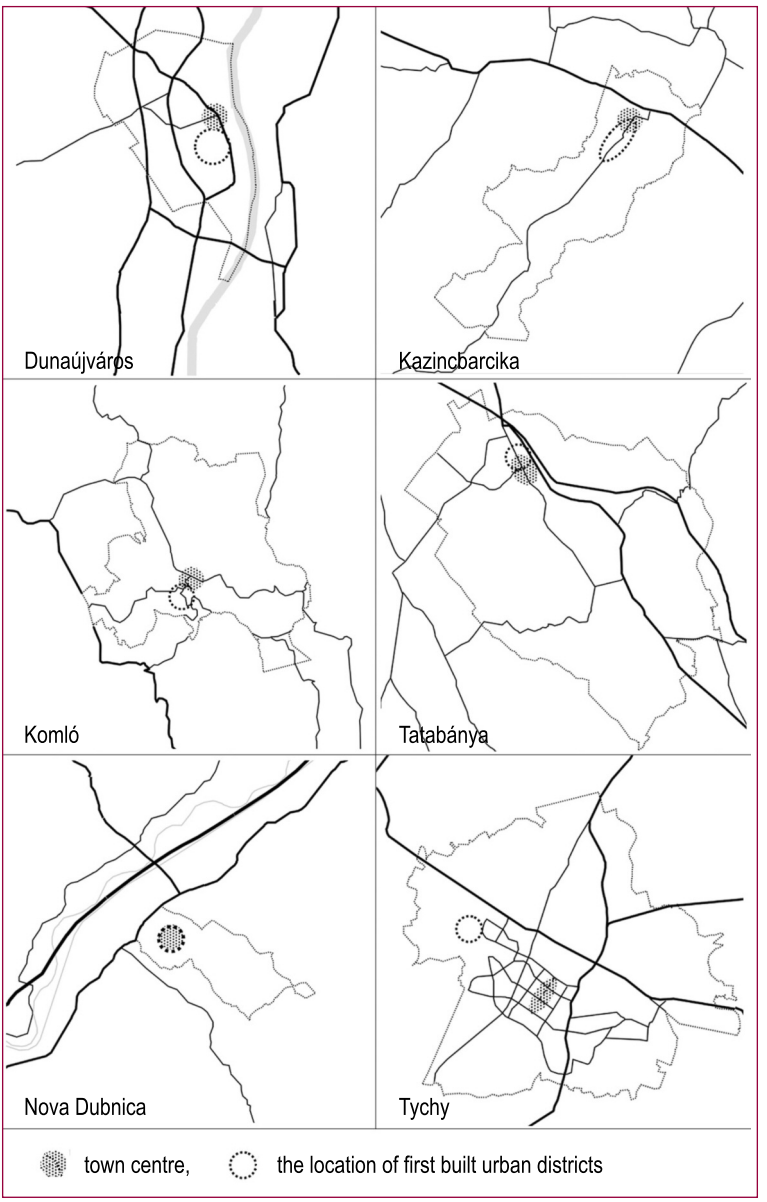
The disadvantages of rigid, non-malleable closed systems that are hard to link to other functional and spatial components were a recurring topic in the trade press of the 1980s *(Brenner, 1982; Perényi, 1983)*. "The more closed and total an architectural system is, the more likely it is to lead to a uniformed cityscape lacking character and in the end, damaging the identity and uniqueness of the city" *(Brenner, 1982)*.

## Urban structure – urban-scale formal and structural characteristics

Contemporary standards contained instructions on the content of the zones but did not regulate their relationship with each other. In other words, they did not define specific compulsory guidelines for city structure. The major structures of new towns were therefore largely different *(Figure 52)* despite the efforts by the contemporary trade press to emphasise the existence of a coherent approach in planning *(Faragó, 1984),* whose most important element was the

[5] Imre Perényi (1913-2002) was „one of the chief official leaders of architectural design and an activist of the party ... one of the highest officials in Hungarian architecture and planning" *(Bonta, 2008)*. He was an unavoidable figure in Hungarian city building in practice, theory, and education as well. As such, this study will quote from his statements and writings many times.

Figure 52: Urban structural frameworks




*Source: The author's own edition*

direct structural connection between the city centre and the industrial area, expressing that the two belonged together on both ideological and functional levels. In most cases, however, this core concept was not expressed in a clear and 'formulaic' manner.

In Hungarian examples a common characteristic of the city structure was the thoroughfare that intersected the city for a long stretch and the city centre that was organised along it. In all city plans the centre, which was typically enclosed with facades, was built near the thoroughfare, regardless whether the road was a historic, regionally important structural path (Tatabánya, Komló), a planned new exploratory path (Kazincbarcika), or a new boulevard expressing the connection between city and industry (Dunaújváros). In the studied Polish and Slovak new towns centres were in a different situation: orthogonal order, symmetry, and a desire to create overarching axes, was much more apparent than the motivation for creating a central main square.

In all cases major structural principles and the ambitions for shaping space and form that were defined for urban architectural collectives could mostly be realised within subdivisions (typically in the residential units built earliest). Today these are often located in marginal places within the urban corpus. A frequent trait of new towns is that residential units are aligned with the city's primary structure; they are compact and well-planned by themselves. However, they often function along their own structural logic as a closed system. Many times they only share a common border with their neighbouring units but are not linked to them in their structure and logic. They are additively placed next to each other, often clearly showing the patchwork nature of the town's building.

## City centres

### *Changing roles – idea and reality*

The state-socialist urban planning principles attached a prominent role to urban centres. This fact and the city centres' general key role playing in the life of settlements justify a more detailed discussion on the subject. New towns were sought to distinguish from historic towns by considering their industrial zone as the symbolic spiritual centre and the fact that the town was spatially defined on the basis of its relationship with the industrial zone needs some clarification.

In socialist new towns industry – as a major economic power in the newly built society, and the principal motive of creating these

cities – really had a significant importance. It is also true that during state socialism, especially in its early stages, behind a number of decisions there was a strong desire for opposing and denying the civilian values of the pre-war period. In historic towns city centes clearly meant the sites of heritage and of spiritual and cultural continuity.

Thus, the logic why socialist new towns attached the role of symbolic city centre to industrial zones instead of them is fully understandable. However, their actual spatial and structural formation caused a problem. While in the ideological field the role and importance of industry were constantly declared in the early stages of new town planning, and its visualisation in urban structure was a definite demand in the rhetoric of professional policy is, the actual plans were rarely able to materialise it consequently. In most cases the spatial location of industrial zones, their fragmentation and landscape characteristics prevented the realisation of this principle. Over time it had been worn out of the city structure's main ideological requirements and remained only as a logistic, urban management aspect.

However, throughout the planning and construction of new towns the intention of building a city centre suitable for hosting institutions and social events, otherwise in real-contents not much different from the traditional ones – was constantly recognisable. *(Figure 53)* In Dunaújváros, which can be regarded as a model to follow from several aspects, this demand has been clearly formulated: the city centre should be "an outstanding representative place of the town; here must be placed the most important political, administrative and cultural institutions. The city centre should be formed as a square; it must be suitable for organising parades and festivities."[6]

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[6] Submission in the subject of approving the urban plan of Stalin City http://www.archivnet.hu/gazdasag/sztalinvarosi_felhokarcolok.html?oldal=2 MOL. XXVI – D – 8 – f/1952/88. d. (Hungarian National Archives – VÁTI Hungarian Nonprofit Ltd. for Regional Development and Town planning – Plan Archive Collection – Box 88

[7] It is worth mentioning that from 1960 with academic support a wide range of city centre researches started at the Budapest University of Technology, highlighting the fact that centre "is the concentration of the city's substance and essence" *(Granasztói, 1963)* Among the studied settlements, however there were no new towns, although the unresolved problems of new town centres were continuously on the agenda.

Despite these principles, it can be said that it is the role, the position and the architectural form of urban centres that have made them one of the most ambivalent elements[7] of new towns. It was already so throughout the planning and construction process of these towns, and this in many cases has not changed up to this day. Simultaneously with propagating the idea of a homogeneous city *(Prakfalvi–Szücs, 2010),* the emphasising of the privileged role of the city centre – structural, spatial and formal – was a basic demand from functional and policy aspects. However, for a long time, the issue of the city centre, as an addition to the unavoidable primary tasks of industrial development and housing, could only be the popular theoretical topic of urban composition plans and projects only.

"In places where new centres have been created, they were usually insufficient in terms of functionality and aesthetically immature" *(Perényi, 1970b)*. So their tasks – though only on a local level – in many cases were performed by sub-centres of residential units, (e.g. Komló, Kökönyös district) or, some small institutional centres and their public areas (see Dunaújváros, the square in front of Dózsa Cinema).The absence or timely delay of city centre construction caused supply i.e. functional shortages *(Barta, 2013),* but it also meant a missing urban reference "point", an urban creative "element" intended to generate ties, character, identity. All this had an impact, and still has an impact on today's operation of the city and its overall image as well.

## *Changes in formal requirements*

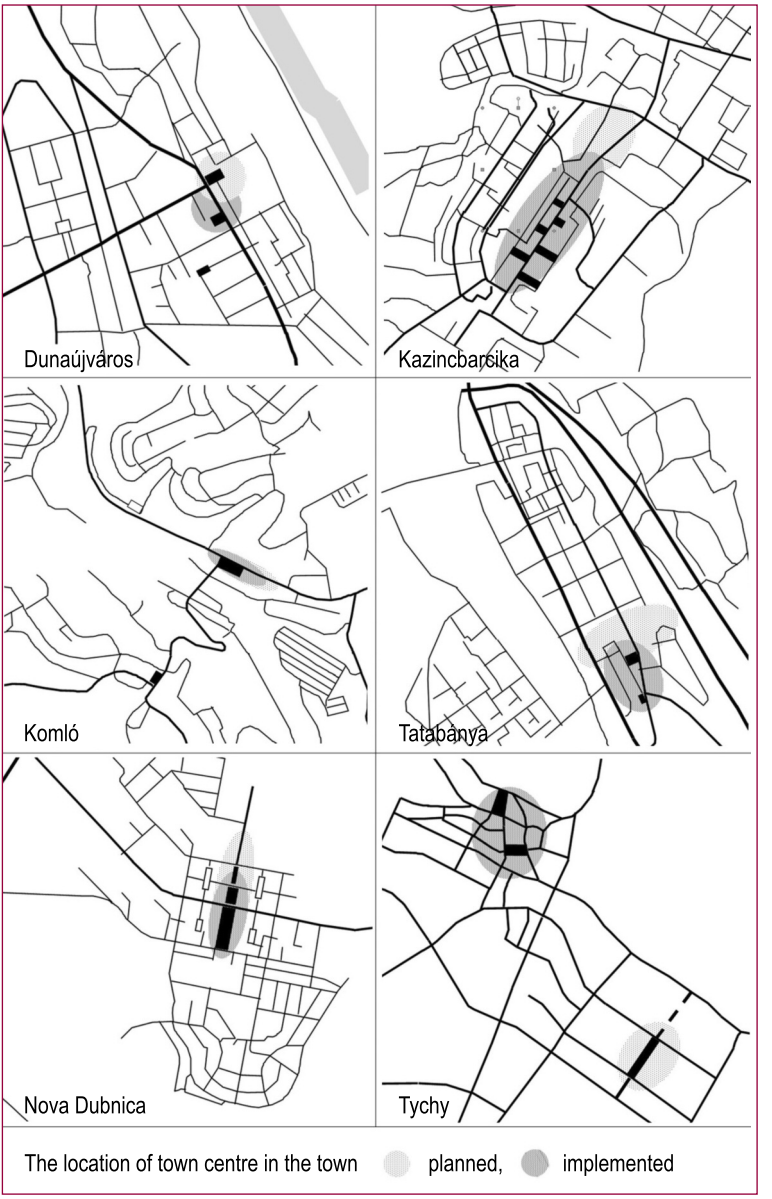
It's quite contradictory that the socialist new town intending to convey its political / social mission in physical form "economised" on one of its most important, most effective means of expression, the city centre. Yet the political leadership proclaimed not only the necessity and the expected role of the city centre but in most cases even its position in the urban structure as well. From formal point of view in the Hungarian new towns the square-like formation was favoured, with shaping a large and representative square for various events, surrounded by the closed facade of institutional buildings. These squares – in accordance with the previously mentioned – opened to the city's main axis, the main road *(Kissfazekas, 2013)*. During the placement of centres, in many cases, landscape condi-

tions also were among the city's compositional devices. During the planning process and the planning council's evaluation of Kazincbarcika's main square, for example, the elevated location of the central area and its inherent skyline-shaping opportunities were continuously on the agenda of the ongoing professional discourses. In the early plans of Tatabánya's the main square's scenery sketches always showed the terrain in the background as an integral part of the composition. An often used architectural composition tool was the tower – typically asymmetrically positioned with the purpose of representation and the architectural emphasis of the city centre. In the case of Dunaújváros and Kazincbarcika in the consecutive plans the tower's position and functions essentially have not changed, only the applied stylistic means, well-illustrating the several paradigmatic changes of the architecture of the 1950s. The town's regular geometric shaped, large-scaled, vertically often emphasised main square became a recurring element of the early Hungarian state socialist city centre plans. According to the Soviet planning practice which was considered as a guideline to be followed, placing some vertical element into major urban structural positions (e.g. city centre) has been put as a kind of model into the 'common knowledge' of planning and in future plans it has survived in the form of a typical 'modernist' tower house. (See this on the realised examples of Dunaújváros and Tychy)

The formal features described show that while the era in all fields sought for abolishing and overriding civilian traditions, meanwhile in terms of urban architectural tools it was based on 'traditional' historical antecedents. The formal images of historic city centres in an undeniable way had influence on plans.

The contemporary new town centres are often characterised by the architectural chaos. This is a problem that has been 'scrolling' for decades. In 1970 – that is 15-20 years after the start of town constructions – a critical remark appeared in the book 'The City Centre' that "Hungarian new town centres can mostly be presented by plans only (...) the majority of town centres are typically unfinished" *(Perényi , 1970b)*.This statement is still true today from several aspects. This is only partly because the centres were not built at the same time with the beginning of town building. Their place was marked in the plans, occasionally a significant square was built and in the majority of cases a building of some urban

Figure 53: The location of town centre in the town (planned, implemented)




*Source: The author's own edition*

significance was placed next to it. In Dunaújváros this was the typically socialist realist building of the Communist Party's Headquarters, in Komló the Council House with the Party Headquarters and the cinema were also built in 'socialist realism' style.

In Tatabánya, which was built not only as a new town but also became the new county seat, perhaps it was a demonstrative, political message that in the planned city centre, of the larger institutional buildings it was the County Hall the first to be built. However, the ambitious plans died, and many construction projects have been stalled after the implementation of the first large-scale institutions.

## Changes in urban architecture and image

Since the beginning, perhaps the most criticised feature of the new towns was their architectural image. This may obviously be associated with the several times changing formal architectural guidelines and public taste, but also with the two main issues discussed earlier, the theoretical and formal contradictions and shortcomings of urban structure and urban centres.
In relation to this, two important factors are worth focusing on:

- The image of city centres, which in each municipality basically affects our view of the city and
- The first phases of construction, which show most of the architectural aspirations associated with the 'artificial town' – model. These towns often cannot 'boast' of historical antecedents, but their construction's history still covers several periods and architectural styles. In this aspect it is instructive to see how the original, early architectural style is dominant in today's cities, and how it is overwritten by the later architectural periods. *(Figure 54)*

### *The characteristic features of urban image and character changes*

Dunaújváros, the first Hungarian model town, and personally Tibor Weiner, its planner, in many aspects was in the centre of attention. Due to the sometimes occurring contrasts between plans, desires, expectations and the realised state it has been the target of numerous attacks by the professionals and even by the laity. In 1967 a heated debate broke out in one of the most important cultural and literary journals (Kortárs), around a central theme that in addition to a number of shortcomings should Dunaújváros really be regarded as a town *(Szíj–Farkasdy–Károlyi–*

*Molnár, 1967)*. This issue is very similar to the one raised by the sociologist Iván Szelényi *(Szelényi, 1996)* that new towns are not considered "urban places" in the true sense of the word.

One of the most common criticisms, which even the official defenders of new towns had admitted was monotony. However, they often noted that this is such a 'depressing problem' that in other (for example, in the Western) new towns is at least to the same extent unresolved *(Filkey, 1967)*. Yet, just raising and solving the aesthetic issues were the task of many urban 'compositional plans'. However, their construction faltered, and the architectural values, along which these former compositional plans had been formulated, were revaluated or devalued over time.

From the 1960s onwards, in Hungary thanks to the publications of the professionals of settlement and architectural history, Pál Granasztói, György Korompay, Frigyes Pogány[8], the aesthetic aspects of the settlements have increasingly been put on the agenda, especially placed in parallel or opposed to the value system of functionalism *(Perényi, 1988)*. The Hungarian new towns' facelessness, the absence of city centres, as yet unresolved problems were even in the 1970s the main topics of professional discourses *(Perényi, 1970a)*.

If today we want to define the image of socialist new towns, it cannot be said that they have well-recognised common criteria. The 'patchy' building practice taking place in phased pace in the early period of their construction itself gave these towns a hectic overall image. In addition, the new towns are also the scenes of various city construction processes and various constructional periods which decisively and very negatively shaped their urban image.

This paper is not going to give a detailed description of the events of the later phases of construction, since their image characteristics generally do not differ from other features of town building processes which took place during the state socialist era. Some of them are marked up by panel housing buildings, although they are

[8] P. Granasztói (1908-85), architect, he has published a number of writings, books on urban aesthetics, urban construction and urban planning. Gy. Korompay (1905-91), architect, urban architect, academic researcher, professional writer and university professor. F. Pogány (1908-76), architect, art historian and urbanist, professor, critic.

not among the specificities of new towns. In addition, however, various public buildings were built in large numbers which were intended to fill in the lack of institutional functions of the city centre buildings. From 1970 onwards, a large number of secondary and tertiary institutions were built, which strengthened the central role of these settlements.

However, some of them "due to narrow-minded, urban context ignoring placement or architectural shaping alien from local characteristics brought about adverse changes and did not serve for the place's becoming more orderly, for its harmonious, high-quality architectural and environmental development" *(Paksy, 1988)*.

## *Socialist realism as a key factor in urban image*

In general, the architectural image of socialist new towns are associated with socialist realism. This is not entirely justified, since new towns were built not only in the 'socialist realism' dominated 1950s but much later, in the 1970s, too. *(Szirmai, 1988)* The 1950s itself was not homogeneous. The 'socialist realism' was dominant for only a short time, but undoubtedly in the era when these towns started and underwent an intensive and therefore decisive development the quantitative provision of housing was the primary goal. As its introduction and the public dethronement was bound to the Soviet Union's political events, in some Central and Eastern European state socialist countries it had a very similar lifetime, its architectural reign may typically be placed into the period between 1949-1956/58. Its space organisational attributes and logic and its architectural styles are well recognised even within a wide range of historic towns as well. In addition to its pure-style forms, it has been tinctured, sometimes mixed with the instrumentational marks of modernism. *(Prakfalvi–Szűcs, 2006; Kissfazekas, 2015)* From urban architectural point it used 'historically traditional' urban compositional instruments, of which the main components are blocks, streets, planned squares and in terms of compositional principles it was characterised by axis structure and symmetry.

As the main era of socialist new town constructions can be placed into the 1950s the elements of 'socialist realism' style can really be found in all of them. However, there are significant differences in how it is determining in a town's urban architecture; whether it is a feature of partial territories or even has an impact on

the whole character and image of the town. This mostly depends on the spatial location and spatial extent of areas built-up by the criteria of socialist realism. The most important aspect of spatiality is the spatial attitude towards the main, most used urban structural places, typically the city centres. In case of spatial dimension, according to 'socialist realism', the size of built-up areas relative to the city's total size should be the determining factor.

### *The identity-shaping role of city centres*

In a city whether it is naturally grown or artificially planned – the city centre has a certain functional and intellectual role to play. In particular, this can be said for medium-sized and small cities *(Granasztói, 1963)*. The locals are tied to the centre and the visitors from outside orientate by it. City centres have an important role also in the context of urban architectural image as well. In many cases, the image of the city centre determines our view of the cityscape. It is no different in the case of newly constructed towns either. However, in the majority of state socialist new towns the city centre, determining the city's overall character, is missing. Of the studied examples this characterises the towns of Dunaújváros, Komló, Tatabánya and in many aspects Tychy. Kazincbarcika and Nová Dubnica due to their system of urban structure of the tendency of their urban architectural processes, evolved from inside, from the centre, not as a centre of a mono-functional institution, but as a mixed zone. The building of the city centre has fallen into the period of socialist realism 'operating' by single architectural instruments. This explains that, overall, mostly these two cities can provide the cityscape, which is generally associated with or expected from a socialist new town.

In the past times the new town's square used to play primarily representational role. However, since the change of regime the utilisation patterns of Central and Eastern European public spaces have changed significantly. The main square may not only serve as a place of organised social intercourse, flanked by imposing institutions as a scenery symbolising the city's importance but is also ideal for spontaneous uses of space. The square walls and the public space they enclosed have become independent of each other in several aspects. In case of good design a public space itself, without the boundary buildings, is may become urban

image forming, identity strengthening element. This has been recognised in more and more settlements involved and by the instruments of public space renewal they try to offset the functional and architectural shortcomings of their centre.

In the following part the characteristic features of the investigated six sample towns will be shown from the aspects of urban structure, city centre and architectural image.

## Dunaújváros

### *Urban structure*

In the case of Dunaújváros, the first Hungarian socialist new town, a very strict political instruction was formulated concerning the elements the planned structure of the city should contain. Among the party policy requirements (which were recorded in written form as well[9]) for the structure of the city it was specified that the city's main roads, used at the same time as a marching route, should link the Iron Works with the city centre.It was a clear and direct reference to the functional and ideological role of industry in the life of the town. As a result, the grandiosely wide Vasmű út (Iron works Road) became the most important main axis of the city having a representative role, which at some places was complemented even with square expansions.

Thus, in the case of Dunaújváros the realisation of urban structure followed doctrinal regulations, so it is not by chance that often the very rational spatial utilisation and the above-described, T-road system connecting the city centre with the plant and the train station were identified as the main virtues of the plan *(Faragó, 1970)*.

However, the principles seemingly very evident from the viewpoint of the system's logic – i.e. spatial organisation and form should refer to ideological content, the standing above all role of industry –did not manifest in other Hungarian new towns in such a way. Dunaújváros was a 'model city', the First among the Hungarian ones; it was a kind of testing ground for the new urban

[9] Submission in the subject of approving the urban plan of Stalin City

architectural ideas of politics and urban professionals, where there were no ties to struggle with, such as historic legacy, or special landscape endowments in case of an existing city during the formulation of a city's new socialist model of development planners and builders inevitably faced. However, at this phase a number of theoretical ideas were formulated only as plans.

## *City centre*

Several plans[10] were prepared for the town – including the city centre – the construction history is well documented and traceable *(Szirmai, 1988, 1998, 2013; Prakfalvi–Szűcs, 2010; Kissfazekas, 2013, 2015)*. The plans attached prominent role to a large and geometrically shaped square suitable for political and social events, which is lined by the most important urban institutional buildings – typically a town hall, city/county party committee buildings.

This central square was axially symmetric, geometrically shaped, and was marked by an asymmetrically positioned spectacular tower as a vertical signalling element. The tower's history is a remarkable phenomenon of the age, as it was strongly influenced, by the fact that the first house built – in socialist realist style – in the centre was the headquarters of the local communist party[11], a building too little compared to the scale of city centre and its political importance. The party headquarters' location on the square and size caused not a small difficulty for planners and policy-makers during the planning of the future city centre and its tower house serving as a vertical signal. Although the main square of the former Sztálinváros (Stalin City) for decades did not get its final form, the above-described "model" well illustrates that period's primary compositional requirements against the main squares of newly formed towns. *(Baranyai, 2016)*

It is so much true that sometimes the plans for spaces in front of major industrial facilities, major factories were following these principles. Another more frequent feature of these spaces was that – due to their representative role -the era's essential monuments, sculptures of emblematic figures were put at their central space, which as a kind of visual code was engraved into the minds of con-

[10] About 20 plans are known from the period between 1951-54 *(Perényi, 1983)*
[11] planned by Tibor Weiner /Erika Malecz; 1949

temporary urban users. One such a typical scheme was the statue of Lenin standing on a high pedestal. The statue of Lenin has for long become the defining element of public space at the main square of Dunaújváros too.

### *Urban architectural image*

The first urban quarter[12] in Dunaújváros was built close to the city centre, but independent of it spatial position and structure which otherwise was judged even by the later critics as the most successful architectural ensemble.

"Socialist realist" spatial construction principles are mixed with modernist built in spaces and buildings the city's real uniqueness of styles originates right from this. The closed row of the tall buildings of the several times mentioned main road (Vasmű út / Iron Works Road) borders this district like a wall, which clearly marks the metropolitan style socialist new town's image.

The deficiencies of the constructional, architectural and characteristic features of city centre have already been mentioned; they obviously have a bearing on cityscape as well. The Town Hall's solid tower house itself is not a sufficient centre-forming element and in the neighbourhood of the housing estates' panel houses reaching up to the city centre it is far from being able to perform a signal-like role asit has been intended.

The main square was renewed in 2014. It was not easy to formulate a new centre emphasising public space image after a Lenin sculptured parade in the town's former axis which was later on replaced by a purely functional parking space role; this is proved by the long hesitation and planning process prior to implementation.

## Kazincbarcika

### *Urban structure*

The structural planning of Kazincbarcika may have been influenced by the existence of several industrial sites (Borsod Chemical Works and mines) *(Berki, 2016),* topography and the planner's

[12] planned by Tibor Weiner

attitude[13]. It is a town built on River Sajó and in Tardona Creek Valley on an approx. 8-meter-high plateau, with a view of relatively high mountains on both sides of the valley. The town planners had a clear intention to create an attractive settlement silhouette for those arriving in the city and to create attractive, urban locations opening to the countryside for local citizens *(Bonta, 2008)*. However, the plans did not intend to create an impressive structural connection between the Chemical Works and the city centre.

Although the plan included a T-shaped highway system with a large-scale square at the intersection, the main street leading to the railway station was more emphasised than linking the planned centre with the industrial area. It was clear that monumentality was not a goal, but rather creating spatial and visual relationship with green structural axes opening towards forests and the surrounding landscape *(Körner–Nagy, 2006)*. The main structure was defined by a central axis on which the city is almost symmetrically organised. This main street in the middle became the city's main spine. Even today, it is the most important – and based on its spatial location within the city an ideal – city centre organising structural element.

Based on the symmetrical feature, the axis as the main compositional element and the sensitivity for environmental conditions Kazincbarcika peculiarly integrates the two characteristic guidelines of socialist realism distinguished by Tamás Meggyesi; the neoclassical and the romantic ones *(Meggyesi, 1985)*.

## *City centre*

Several plans have been prepared for Kazincbarcika's city centre as well and it was also the site of a tender *(Ádám, 1979; Kissfazekas, 2015; Schmiedl, 1954)*. The urban master plan resulted in a clear structure, terrain conditions adapted construction and favourable spatial connections. The central square has never been built, although the selection of the site was carried out very carefully; the landscape connectivity and landscape aspects were also examined in this aspect. Even in the first version planners sought for complex architectural composition. The main square was planned for closing down the main street (central axis), where commercial, admi-

[13] planned by Károly Valentyin, 1951.

nistrative (city hall, party headquarters) and cultural buildings (theatre, library) would have been clustered with a tower house in the axis of the main street. Although the square was not built but subsequently some institutional buildings were erected in hectic architectural quality following the line of the main street (the town hall, shops and a department store). Instead of a signal-like tower house – although not exactly in the axis – the wall of the shorter side of a long 10-storey residential panel house can be seen.

Today, the role of city centre is filled by this central axis (now Egressy Road) which from EU funds has recently been turned into a pedestrian zone further emphasising the street's urban structural role in a positive way.

### *Urban architectural image*

The various housing-construction periods are not absent from Kazincbarcika's development phases either. The 5 and 10-storey housing estates, typically built by panel technology surround the socialist realist core of the city like a shell. As previously said, the building of the main square and its imposing building complexes failed but the location of the central axis, its structural position and the accompanying built in environment well orient visitors to the town in space and time. The situation within the town's body is clearly comprehensible; the town's architectural language is well readable.

The main street due to its above-mentioned transformation into pedestrian zone and the renewal of connected squares received a new content. It is a main street in the true sense of the word, which significantly replaces the not built up main square, and it gives such a surplus to the town, which the majority of other new towns do not have: a spatially well-defined, mixed-use, a liveable centre.

One can therefore say that in spite of the subsequent development and growth the town has a distinctive image, and this image fits well into the often stereotypical vision that is associated with the socialist new towns.

## Mining towns – Tatabánya and Komló

### *Urban structure*

It was obviously more difficult to define a clear spatial and symbolic centre of industry in mining towns than the entrance of Dunaújváros Iron Works that has become a cult. The construction of mining settlements did not allow for decisions purely made on 'doctrinal' basis. During the selection of their site and building-in methods economic, operational aspects had to receive priority, which were further refined by geological and topographical conditions specific to mining areas *(Halász, 2016)* and the building in and engineering constraints dictated by them.

There were no uniform guidelines, often short site visits, some committee discussions and individual estimates provided the basis for site selection; this situation was further complicated by the fact that in the early '50s, mineral resources, including coal fields were not fully explored and mapped *(Fürst–Sós, 1952)*. So instead of 'drawing' the new defining guidelines of construction, mining towns retained the historic valley line as a main shaft. This served as a starting point for the centre and the structural skeleton of residential space units was also connected to it. This decision was justified by the fact that small settlements built prior to and merging into new towns were often following this structural line.

Among the investigated settlements the above-mentioned facts are true for Komló and Tatabánya. Both towns' present urban morphology is strongly influenced by the fact that they were created by the artificial administrative merging of several small villages. *(Schuchmann, 2016)*. In the later construction projects there were efforts to 'interweave' the different individual villages together but this only partially succeeded. In these two towns the landscape endowments, the valleys cutting the settlement, with the adaptation of existing roads, railway lines following the main structure stretching into the linear valley became the characteristic features of the new town. Komló was one of those cities where the settlement plan was not scheduled, but was uniformly prepared for the whole settlement.

Nevertheless, the town still remained very patchy; the town's body is highly articulated. The plan organised the town and its new centre on the valley main road and the residential units on the

residential street following layer lines. Due to the latter circumstances the plan was criticised because the terrain capabilities were taken into account to a much greater extent (i.e. not adjusted mechanically to the central directives of urban structure) in comparison to the previous practice, "its nature due to strong western influence was less aligned with the traditional formation of our cityscapes" *(Rados, 1971)*.

In Tatabánya linearity was even stronger; the newly built town with the planned large-scale city centre was placed into the zones between nearly parallel transport lines.

## *City centres*

Both in Tatabánya and Komló a prominent square formed the core of the proposed centre. Their scale, their need for representation, however, showed significant differences. In Tatabánya in the so-called New Town district, a symmetrical enclosed square was envisioned, which would have been suitable for holding celebrations for 20-30,000 people.The axial geometrically ordered square was composed with the view of Gerecse and Kő-hegy mountains in the background. In the centre[14] on a slightly sliding stair-lined-square opposite to the County Council the Municipal Council would have been placed with the building of the Municipal Party Committee; the square would have been encircled by the buildings of the County and Municipal Court, Cultural Centre, the headquarters of the Mining Trust and a department store. Back off the post office headquarters, the Market Hall and the County Police Department headquarters[15] with the buildings of an apprenticeship training school would have been situated *(Wehner, 2007)*.

The County Hall[16] was the only building that has been built. The plans were continuously prepared at one of the largest state planning offices of Budapest, but meanwhile architectural guidelines changed. The new plans left the centre at the original location (the ribbon-like geometric centre of town), but instead of the previous perpendicular to hill symmetrical layout a linear layout better fit-

14 planned by Miklós Visontai
15 built in 1953
16 planned by János Scultéty, 1952/53

ting the geographic realities, was chosen[17]. In 1962 a new general plan also noted the principle that instead of a disintegrated and disorganised structure and scattered institutional and commercial network, a new, clear, and general-scale urban structure is needed, with a redefined city centre *(Csanádi, 1988).*

Almost all the town's major public institutions were placed in the area called 'Újvárosi városközpont' (New Town City Centre), a very narrow zone between the railway and the main road, but the planned construction of a 'classic' tower house to emphasise the importance of the city centre was cancelled. Over time, nearly all the major public buildings were built, but the prolonged construction process, the planning programmes were modified several times and the ever-changing urban planning concepts greatly left their mark on the operation and image of the centre.

There were several criticisms against it, mainly emphasising the absence of strength in urban composition. The centre is still extremely heterogeneous, fragmented and mosaic-like in terms of public space and building stock. As stuck in between the two highways, its internal system and orientation are hard to be determined. The architectural quality of the buildings is mixed, the characteristics of built in space is dominated by rows of standalone buildings without connections.

The city centre of Komló is hard to define. This is mainly the consequence of the development process already mentioned, the new town was built up by an additive sequence of subdivisions. The main square opening from the historic main road, exploring the area with the socialist realist style Council House and Hotel, was completed in the early stages of the town's construction period.

An additional road was built to the square leading towards south connecting it with Kökönyös district the town's first housing estate, located much farther away from the centre, functioning as a sub-centre. The square in comparison with the one planned for Tatabánya is less ambitious, its size and institutional program was moderate. The original plan as a continuation of the square next to the main road proposed an urban style, typically closed, homogenous built-in area, thus it did not consider the square alone as the centre of the city. However, the built in area lining the

[17] planned by Tamás Mandel

main road was not created in such a form; instead solitary buildings appeared in many cases having no functional relationship with one another, bearing the architectural character of different ages along the main road. Their presence, in many cases, seems to be random and occasional.

### *Urban architectural image*

In Tatabánya the first socialist realist residential buildings were built adjacent to the planned centre. The homogeneous, typical 4-storey buildings accompany the west side of the main street (today Komári Street), the urban style enclosed, street view of framed apartment blocks and the architectural details undeniably convey the cityscape of a new socialist realist city. All these, however, are significantly counterweighed by the extremely heterogeneous buildings of the city centre 'launching' the main street.

The town's present image is strongly determined by the overall impression revealed by the panoramic view from the elevated motorway leading to the capital city. The key elements of the settlement are the low, poor conditioned, slum-like, grey residential buildings of the same type with tower house groups markedly standing out. However, arriving in the town one can see that the housing estates built in the early times with their well-planned built in space intensity, airspace ratios between buildings, with their micro-architectural elements still existing in many places and with their onset of greenery can offer very pleasant residential quality, in spite of their poor physical condition. This is a very thought-provoking feature of the early new towns' residential areas, especially compared to the high tower house residential areas built later in these towns.

The cityscape of today's Tatabánya is significantly determined by the fact that the city centre was built in stages and often not in tune with each other; this is all the more so, since this conglomerate, called as centre, at the same time serves as a gateway to the town from south and from the capital city.

In contrast to this, in Komló the different phases of institutional construction are linearly sequenced along the major axis passing through the city. The central uniform faced town square cannot give an essential character and it is unable to make the viewer forget the hectic nature of the main road already mentioned. Of the

pleasant residential units making up a major part of the town not much is seen from the main road. Only the buildings of the so-called Kenderföld district 'slipping down' to the main axis advancing through the valley, and connected to the main square, can provide a more dominant impression on the character of the remote, residential areas creeping up the hill.

Here the already mentioned Kökönyös[18] (practically the "model area" in Komló) was the first built residential ensemble. Its building was a kind of tabula rasa; it could be linked neither to Komló's comb patterned small old historic settlement nor to the miners' district, called Újtelep, built in the 1920s. However, it was connected with the planned new city centre, which was emphasised by the socialist realist building of the local Mining Industry Trust, by a direct structural connection – a new road.

Its main square for a long time was regarded as the town's architectural symbol; it was a favourite topic of publications and photos on contemporary urban architecture. In Komló this residential quarter represented the positive example of built-in area and architectural image which contemporary (professional) policy wanted to convey about the town.

In addition, in a similar way to Dunaújváros, the direction changes in architecture – the style encounters of the alternating periods of modernism and socialist realism – can be traced back here too. The residential quarter on the basis of its spatial position is peripheral within the mosaic patterned urban structure, so despite its geographical endowments it cannot be regarded as an essential, city-wide image element.

## The Polish example – Tychy

### *Urban structure*

The Polish and Slovak examples show a significant difference to the Hungarian patterns described above. The Polish Tychy even in the planning phase was intended to be much larger (planned for 100,000 people) than the other municipalities studied. The proxi-

[18] Plans of buildings by László Zoltán

mity of Katowice, and that the town originally was defined as a sleeping town, can be seen on the structure as well *(Coudroy De Lille, 2007)*.

The main directions of the city's network were determined by the spatial position of the industrial city in the north-east direction and of the neighbouring suburban settlements. The city centre was split into two major parts by the planners'[19] conception; into northern and southern territory along the railway line.

The area of the central part was filled in by a square patterned 1 km by 1 km checkerboard type grid system. The planned road network was shaped a nearly regular rectangular system; its central element became a green axis closing in a wide park stretching along the city centre. In the urban structure the same sized blocks accompanying the city's green axis are well delineated. Several plans were prepared, but the uniform orthogonal grid as a structural frame was a common conceptual element of the plans. In the structure outside the green axis designating the central axis there was not a definite hierarchy, there is no focusing on a central area, on one spectacular square. In this way, out of the settlements studied, perhaps Tychy stands the closest to the idea of social policy, which defined the socialist model of the city as a combination of equivalent areas.

Later on, several neighbouring villages were annexed to the city, which carried on their structure, local identity and community habits. This fact, as well as the size and structure of the settlement more inhibited here the creation of a seemingly integrated new town. *(Balockaite, 2012)*

## *City centre*

In the physical plans of Tychy the intersection of the settlement intersecting two perpendicular striking axes ('Axis of walking' and the 'green axis') suggests the presence of the city centre. Indeed the Town Hall's Y-forming tower house was placed here (1970) by which, in the already mentioned way, the importance of position in the urban structure was meant to be emphasised *(Bonta, 2008; Prakfalvi–Szűcs, 2006)*.

[19] Kazimierz Wejchert and Hanna Adamczewska

But this was only a favoured geometric point in the city, not a real city centre, in the true sense of the word. The building is surrounded by an 'extensive empty space' (Parade Square), which by that time turned into a public city park *(Chojecka, 2015)*. Tychy had historical antecedents, a small medieval town, to which in the symmetric, composed new urban structure no special spatial role was attained *(Polish Ministry, 2010)*.

Around it was built the city's other, so-called "B" housing estate where planners tried to adapt to topographic conditions, they were striving to compose the views of the old church, and among the new buildings preserve the old ones. It was a kind of 'romantic' planning approach, even the urban architects themselves called their plan so. *(Lipok–Bierwiaczonek, 2010)*.[20] The heritage of urban structure can clearly be seen in the environment that is uniquely combined with the spatial organisation and building method of the 50s seeking for symmetry. In spite of the axis style, the closed building form and the uniform cornice heights the district is not monotonous.

The housing estate's spatial relations, the lines of the streets, historicity provide a sense of historical continuity and real-centre experience at the same time, which can very rarely be felt in new towns. The urban architectural products of the period of socialist realism were often labelled as monotonous, lacking the virtues of historic towns and settlements *(Kőszegfalvi, 1983)*. This quarter of Tychy well demonstrates that the style despite a number of its inflexibilities, in the 'hands' of the planner using the elements not mechanically, could be well adapted to the existing endowments.

## *Urban architectural image*

Based on Tychy's size and scope it would be difficult to ask for a unified city image. The city centre, as described above, would be difficult to define both in spatial and characteristic aspects.

It is not by chance that in connection with the city the attributes frequently recurring are as follows: "loose collection of large house-

[20] http://www.unikatowetychy.pl/en/etap,2,the-b-c-and-e-housing-estate

ing estates, a 'socialist dormitory', a bedroom in socialist style, an 'unshaped city', a 'desert', or a 'workers' lodging house for Silesia" *(Szceczpanski, 1993; Balockaite, 2012)*. All of them are suggesting the lack of real urban life, character and identity, and are similar to the already mentioned criticisms of the debate having arisen in 1967 about Dunaújváros. In comparison with it, it's worth reading the planners' code of belief: "Our task has been to build a town, not a group of housing estates separated from each other and not creating an urban formation. The town is not an agglomeration of housing estates with a shopping centre. The town is an organic creature".[21]

The first built ('A') housing estate based on the use of structural, constructional, architectural and decorative instruments can be defined as a 'classic' socialist realist residential area[22]. It has been realised as a strictly axis symmetrical closed-building complex in the eastern corner of today's city. In the centre of the two housing estates, organised on the east-west axis a library, a post office, retail and service units, and the former miners' Community Centre was located with several micro-architectural decorative elements.The construction of the housing estate preceded the city-wide zoning plan, which explains its very inorganic relationship with other areas of the city. Based on the spatial position within the city it cannot substantially influence the general urban image.

## The Slovakian example – Nová Dubnica

### *Urban structure*

For the Slovakian Nová Dubnica an impressive urban structure was originally planned[23]. The town's initial 15-20 thousand population number was increased paralelly by additional 5,000 by planning. Typically the town, which is lying between two fan-like

[21] Contemporary Architects eds. Emanuel, M. p.879. https://books.google.it
[22] planned by Tadeusz Teodorowicz-Todorowskiy
[23] planned by Jiří Kroha 1951, March. In 1948 „the most vocal supporter of the 'Soviet model' among architects in Czechoslovakia". The assignment with the Nová Dubnica project was the most important stage of his career. The project designer was Ivan Ciporanov.

parting main roads, was intended to be placed into an orthogonal urban network and a regular, uniformly designed four-block architectural ensemble was formed in its geometric centre.

The central axis of the composition was a wide town square with a green park, which focused on a huge ampiteathre at the northern edge of town. Here also the axis leading to the landscape instead of closing or marking the axis by a grandiose city square was an important element of the composition as it was in the case of the investigated Hungarian towns.

In this regard there is a significant structural similarity with the proposals in the plan of Tychy. However, the composition was only partially realised. The first phase, which is linked to the main road-network by an access road, a 'footstalk' only, was built according to the plan. Some of the main elements of the structure were also implemented according to the original plans. However, the building in process in many places did not follow the original plans. In the southern part of the town the orthogonal road network was combined with a completely different logic structure *(Gajdoš–Moravanská, 2016)*.

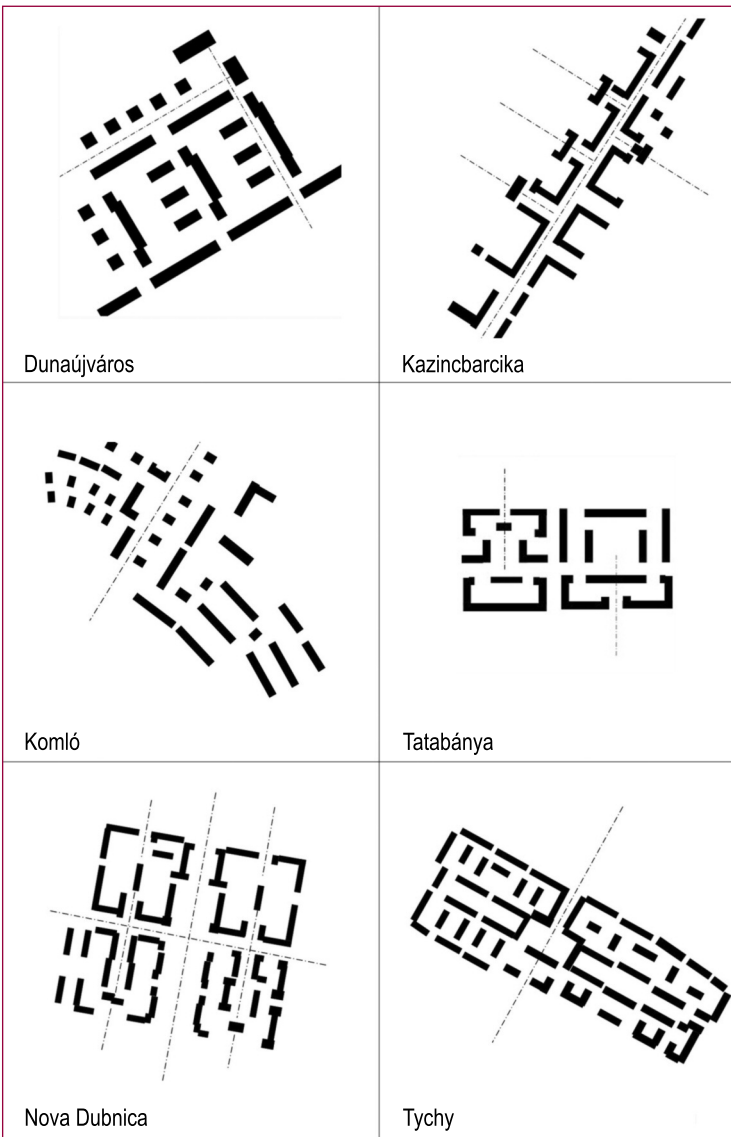
Although the first construction phase of the new town is a sealed, completed unit but from the viewpoint of the entire settlement's structure and building, however, seems a sort of torso, an alien element, a separate, enclosed entity within the body of the city.

### *City centre*

The building of Nová Dubnica, similarly to Kazincbarcika, started from the 'middle'. According to the plan, the area was built in by the architectural ensemble enclosing the town's central main square. The four-block unit draws a completely regular square geometry whose central axis is the already mentioned broad, large-scale landscaped urban square.

This square, however, is by far different from the kind of which you can see in the plans of Hungarian new towns. In the city centres of Hungarian new towns representativeness was expressed only partially by emphasising the size of squares of the new town centres. The enclosed urban style composition and surrounding the square with institutions of major importance were more important. In contrast to this, the main square of Nová Dubnica has such a depth of space that rather gives the sense of a wide

Figure 54: First built urban districts of the examined new towns




The structure and building pattern of the first built urban districts (with determinative visual axes)

*Source: The author's own edition*

boulevard than a city square. The buildings around the square typically function as residential flats, with shops running along under the arcades on the ground floor. Urban services are con-

centrated in the centre (Mierové námestie), this was an important part of the original concept as well.

At the same time since its beginnings, Nová Dubnica has been characterised by above-average facilities which did not match its size but rather its status as a "model socialist town" *(Gajdoš–Moravanská, 2016)* Although the rates of empty and built in spaces are high, the square does not create a megalomaniac sense. Here the intellectual and formal relationship with historical images is also noticeable but this is not identical with the architecture of the Hungarian new towns' representative spaces of mono-functional institutions.

### *Urban architectural image*

The centre of Nová Dubnica with a long, wide square formed between six-storey frame shaped building blocks has a very strong character. The four blocks appear from outside as a closed entity which allows access only from a dominant axis; it is not by chance that the most published facade of the buildings is dominated by a symmetrical, gate-like composition with a tower motif in the axis. Some architectural elements (e.g. the towers) are naming the neighbourhood's historic buildings as formal historic images. *(Zarecor, 2011)*

The wide interior with a circled arcade on the ground floor intends to reproduce the atmosphere of the historic city centre. The quality of housing in the town is highly thought of and is one of the main reasons for the town's attractiveness and the satisfaction of its inhabitants. *(Gajdoš–Moravanská, 2016)*. Thus, it can be declared that although the integrity of the central core within today's urban body and its relationship with the surrounding differently built in areas is controversial, but suits the overall city scape image of the socialist new towns.

## Conclusions

Based on the analysis of the examples shown, it can be stated that strong similarities can be detected between the Central and Eastern European state socialist new towns in planning principles independently of country. It is not surprising, since in all of the

countries concerned the Soviet general directives were taken into account in determining which of them should be applied; sometimes even the representatives of the Soviet urban policy tried to 'help' with personal visits and advice. Nevertheless, in terms of realisation among cities – even within countries – a number of differences found; a fact which shows that general requirements did not necessarily result in schematic-type solutions. Local conditions, or the plan approval process or the unique characteristics of construction or planner's qualities have refined, shaped central requirements to a great extent. On the grounds of these it can also be observed that although on the level of plans there are recurring elements in the structure of the surveyed cities (linearly stretched urban fabric, creation of an urban main axis, which was often "reinforced" by a concentrated main square in the Hungarian examples) but in reality, apart from some small details they do not have fundamentally identical features.

The axial appearance, the parade road, the vertical focus are elements easily associated with new towns, as they are commonly known urban architectural instruments of socialist realism. A parade road built on such 'pure principle' motives as in Dunaújváros is nowhere to be seen, the so often emphasised structural relationship with the industrial area is the most direct here in comparison to the studied cities.

It may arise therefore, that according to which criteria should socialist new towns be identified. The architectural character may be relevant, but there are few socialist industrial towns whose character is based on socialist realism in a uniformed manner. Out of the studied examples Kazincbarcika and Nová Dubnica *(Gajdoš– Moravanská, 2016)* are the best fit into this criterion because the features of "socialist realist" style define the image of the city centre itself.

In the other towns one can often see the hectic cityscape of the changing settlements, a mix of different construction periods with the distinctive features of the urban image of the 'average' Central and Eastern European cities forced to live through the urban development and construction processes in the state socialist era. The anywhere recognisable patterns of the homogenous architectural ensembles of socialist realism often appear between spatial units very different in character.

Compared to historical cities where the expanding development outward from the dense inner core is well recognisable, the new

urban morphology of new towns is different. Their settlement fabric, in fact reflects the idea of the 'same quality' areas which was one of the basic principles of the urban planning vision of the past.

Accordingly, the structural compactness and autonomy of individual territorial units are strongly dominant in comparison to the grown cities, which is a consequence of the phased building-in process by neighbourhood units. The patchwork-like system of residential units with a unique style organised by their own construction principles, often operating as a separate, difficult to integrate community as well, is common – typical both in Hungarian and foreign examples. *(Balockaite, 2012)*.

The lack of city centre is also a general characteristic feature, which raises problems mainly not because of functional, institutional deficiencies, but because of the lack of orientation and of specific city-related unique image. Today's reinterpretation of public areas, among others in the majority of cases just wants to fill in the absence of this central "Place." Here the searching for identity issue which is closely linked to the subject-matter should also be mentioned *(Light, 2000),* which is one of the most common problems in Central and Eastern European post-socialist cities after the change of regime. *(Balockaite, 2012)*.The post-socialist societies are trying to process, recollect and communicate outwards their state-socialist era in different ways. Beyond the general problems emerging after the regime change (economic restructuring, privatisation, inflation and their social implications, such as unemployment, etc.) the planned new towns and historic settlements with strong ties to the state socialist system had to face further challenges as well. *(Csizmady–Ferencz, 2016)* Among other things, as getting rid of the often negative bias associated with the socialist attribute, they had to fight for their new brand within the urban network.

All the cities, which have had historical antecedents, have means that can be activated in the field of identity. Young and Kaczmarek (2008) set forth three general methods that are used in the affected municipalities (decommunisation; return to the pre-socialist Golden Age; Westernisation / Europeanisation of the town). However, in the purpose-built new industrial cities, they do not always work, so these cities have to apply other strategies as well. Balockaite identifies additional familiar methods in the usual matter of the material and spiritual heritage of socialist new towns:

("active forgetting of the socialist past; commercialisation of the socialist past via tourism; ironic imitation of the West, vis-á-vis de–ideologised images of "green and young" towns; bifurcation of consciousness into private remembrance and public forgetting of the past") *(Balockaite, 2012)*.

Out of the settlements presented here, the strategy of Dunaújváros is obvious. With the so-called Architectural Trail consciously undertakes the new town's state socialist past and its architectural heritage.The town organises conferences and issues publications about its past, and building history. Though, other cities, are more cautious with the establishment of a new touristic brand such as the memories of state socialist urban planning, architectural monuments. The new image that Tychy is going to represent is that of a green city, able to provide pleasant lifestyle and good environmental conditions. It seems, as if not so consciously, like Tychy, but for other new towns mostly the liveable, airy, offering lots of green space urban vision is the most viable option. However, this image is not so easy to assert, due to prejudices, related to the former socialist new industrial cities. The reason for this is that for a long time industry here was not only an economic driving force, but it entailed almost an uncontrolled environmental load as well. In addition, however, the undeniable still existing common values of these cities are, – especially in the early-built areas – the scale of the living environment, liveability, the proportion of green areas and the quality level of the public areas' micro-architecture. It's worth appraising the elements which beyond the building in methods are making it possible to clearly identify the construction period as a kind of environmental pattern (reliefs above the entrance, building decorating figurines) as special values.

While with their schematic topics ("happy child, strong, optimistic workers, mother and child") they clearly transmit the old ideological-political messages, at the same time in many cases they are demanding, unique, personal, and therefore often really lovable.

The professional and public perception of socialist realism has greatly improved recently. It is not by chance that a socialist realist building is already under national protection (e.g. in Dunaújváros), while at some places the municipalities themselves initiate the placing of their architectural ensembles at least under local protection. (Kazincbarcika).

The analysis and investigation of new towns is a high priority research area. Despite the old principles, the politicisation, these settlements were formulated along the lines of the idea of a modern, liveable city; the plans in this regard truly intended to create a sort of "ideal city". Following the specific historical and geopolitical situation in the various countries in the development history of nearly the same guidelines were tinctured, the main structural criteria, the details of form differentiated, their integrity and ties are still recognisable.

The processing and analysis of the era's urban planning, architectural, albeit slowly, but has already begun in some countries. However, there is a shortage of the above-mentioned comparative studies, which could serve as a basis for revealing the urban architectural aspects of the common fate of Central and Eastern European countries.

Those criteria, although strongly bound to the West-European intellectual trends in this region, were still specifically reinterpreted due to historical processes. The research of the specifics of the region and its cross-border similarities/differences has still many shortcomings. This study sought to somewhat reduce them.

# PART IV.

# CONCLUSIONS

# The Main Social Polarisation Features of the East-Central European New Town Regions

Viktória Szirmai

## Introduction

The book titled *"Artificial Towns" in the 21st Century; Social Polarisation in the New Town Regions of East-Central Europe* undertook the task of presenting the East-Central European new towns and in this context, mainly the Hungarian, but also the Polish and Slovak social polarisation mechanisms of the new towns and their regions, the contemporary typical social structural interrelationships and their determinations. Furthermore, the book attempts to give an answer to the overall question whether a new type of urban development model has been created during the development of "socialist" new towns that up to now has preserved the historical features typical of new towns i.e. whether it has maintained its own characteristic features stemming from its past along with the differences in comparison with other town types.

These towns all have been created by governmental decisions from public resources, in the pursuit of several aspirations. The forced development of economy – especially of heavy industry – was a priority, as well as the establishment of their necessary industrial bases. The political demand of a full reckoning with the

The study has been realised within the confines of the research entitled "Social Polarisation in the Hungarian and Eastern-Central European 'New Town' Regions: Impacts of Transition and Globalisation" (K 106169), funded by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office.

(bourgeois) past, the building of new, that is socialist and at the same time workers' towns without any social inequalities, which were different from any earlier towns, were if not the objectives, but at least very strong promises of the ideologies represented by central party states.

Therefore, the central element of the researches underlying the book was the exploration of social structural features, social polarisation and their spatial sections. Although it is clear today that these ideologies could not guarantee the full realisation of the promises concerning the elimination of social inequalities (as already mentioned, not least because their realisation would have required or would require other social structural intervention tools in addition to urban architectural instruments as well). Therefore, this book does not seek to examine these promises either. However, it seeks to examine what these towns are like today? Have they preserved their historically established features, their urban identity, the main features of their social structure and their spatial social positioning? What changes have occurred in these characteristics: in urbanistic and urban structural features, in the social, spatial location? What is characteristic of their today's social structure, have they preserved their so-called workers' town nature, young character? How are they located in the city-region areas? Are there any signs of social separation, or segregation in them?

The answers to these questions may serve as clues to answering the two comprehensive questions raised in the introductory part of this book. One question was whether as a result of new town developments a special, new town type has been created, different from any others existing town types, in Eastern and Central Europe, including Hungary? The other question was whether contemporary new town societies have realised any of the historically formulated promises, in other words: how to evaluate the social conditions characteristic of today's new town regions; only as unfulfilled promises or rather as a viable social milieu for their current inhabitants? For the answers it was necessary to analyse the historical and contemporary characteristics of "socialist" new towns, their historical determinations stemming from the past but still valid today, and the transformation processes characteristic today. On the other hand, the similarities and differences between the new town regions and other types of town regions had to be also examined.

## Path dependency and the contemporary changes

### *Historical effects*

The effects of modern architectural doctrines influencing the formation of Western European new towns can up to the present day be detected both in the relations and the social polarisation characteristics of the studied Eastern and Central European new towns and their regions. Evolving from these principles mostly those commonly specified urban structural prints, architectural characteristic features can be identified that separate them from the relevant characteristics of other town types developed in traditional manner. While obviously, modern architectural features can be found in every city, but to a lesser extent, and in far more mixed forms, as the variety of past and modern architectural styles.

In each studied country the planning of the first phases that determined the development of new towns attempted to control local social life, including the prevention of spatial social segregation. Its realisation was supported by a number of planning dogmas: among them (also) mainly for the purpose of creating "workers' towns", the formation of neighbourhood units of a homogeneous architectural character as well as the principles of order, discipline, purpose fulness, homogenously composed and connected cities and the principle of the unity of the factory and the city. For a long time these principles of planning appeared to be successful because the lack of segregation was ensured not only by undifferentiated architectural residential conditions, but also by the undifferentiated structural conditions of residential features.

The later developmental periods, have overwritten these social dogmas and their spatial social panels. The new towns' standard, usually two-room flats, the housing estates of essentially one-dimensional architectural image (which served more for labour force reproduction and less for leisure activities) only in the first periods fulfilled the needs of the homogeneous (mainly unskilled) social status population. The afterwards changing social structure required a different residential environment which the city administration was mostly unable to provide either because of the continuous reduction of local funds or the geographical limitations of urban development, or the contemporary impacts of short-term planning mechanisms, ignoring future needs and possibilities.

Although the state construction industry also evolved in the meantime, the new towns served quasi as touchstones of the newer versions of modernising construction technologies. From the 1970s onwards next to some of the standard (usually four-) storey buildings built in the previous periods higher (ten storey-) buildings were built with more diversified but still standard (two- or three-bedroom) flats. But the real change was brought by the privatisation of real estate and housing market and the evolution of the middle-class: from 1980 onwards, but especially in the 1990s in almost all the new towns modern (typical of the particular era) residential quarters were built which represented the individual needs, the expectations and the market power of the residents of different social positions.

The local manifestations of the communist regime's mechanisms, the key positions prevailing at the first stages of the development of new towns and then the disadvantaged positions of the later periods all draw powerful dividing lines between the new towns and the other types of towns. In the yet flourishing stages of communist regimes the conditions of all the socialist new towns were strongly determined by the characteristic features of the centralised allocation of development resources based on re-distributive society and regional management, and their many years of exceptionally favourable situation in that system. One of its very important manifestations was that the state parties almost "countlessly" provided housing and infrastructure development funds for "workers'" towns. In the first periods of new town developments these were the only places where people got brand new flats, (and also a job). This explains why large scale migrations started especially from the rural (agricultural) settlements held in atrophy by the central powers of the affected countries to new towns. In all cases this generated a rapid population growth in the new settlements.

In the 1990s (and particularly after 2010), their population significantly decreased; due to the economic crises associated with the change of regime, the labour layoffs following the large-scale financial difficulties of big plants and as an attempt to escape from unemployment many people returned to their home settlements in this period but others migrated mainly to economically advanced larger cities able to offer job opportunities, especially to their neighbouring settlements but more recently (as a result of the

European Union's employment opportunities) abroad as well. The present outmigration of the population, the declining population is one of the serious (even more serious compared to other towns) problems of post-socialist new towns.

### *Workers' cities*

According to the ideological aims of socialist urbanisation the Eastern and Central European new towns were built for the workers. However, the Hungarian researches of the 1970s and 1980s revealed that the reality is more differentiated: the socialist new towns of that period served the interests of the elite; the (usually highly educated) technical managers of large companies, local council leaders (the predecessors of today's local governments), skilled workers with medium-level qualifications (mainly men) and of mid-level foremen *(Szirmai, 1988)*. These researches highlighted the dividedness of the social structures of Hungarian new towns, the favourable living and working conditions, the higher income of the elite groups but also the disadvantaged income conditions and life quality of the unskilled, mostly uneducated female labour force but also of the free intellectual workers and graduates.

The socialist new town development strategies emphasised not only the workers' character of new settlements, but also highlighted their higher social importance and future building roles compared to other settlements. It gave a difficult task for local societies whose members due to the absence of job opportunities were forced to move away from their original (mostly rural) place of residence and yet had not been integrated into the new homes for a long time and because of the lack of coherent urban cultures, local rules and values historically existing in the traditional town types, it was even impossible for them to integrate.

Over the years, the partially, but still coming ideological and local social integration later had negative effects: partly during the first "dethronements" in the early 1980s, the radical reduction of central funds following the crises of communism, partly in the transition periods of the 1990s: when new towns were demoted on all levels of the society. The population of the new towns did not understand and still does not understand what "sin" they have committed that they had to feel almost ashamed of the benefits of their past, and especially why they need to live worse now.

## *Contemporary social structures*

The facts of the representative research for 11 new town regions conducted in 2015 revealed that the historical social structural features are still existent: based on the distribution of the population by occupational categories Hungarian new towns can still be called workers' towns: among the new towns' population the number of blue-collar employees is the highest, even higher than their proportion in Hungarian large urban metropolitan areas. The ratio of white-collar workers, high-skilled workers over the years have considerably increased, but it does not reach the corresponding rates for Hungarian large urban metropolitan societies. The Polish and Slovak analyses highlight similar facts.

However, along with this new trends also prevail: in the context of the regime change the former social structural features of the new towns have transformed due to the privatisation of large companies, to the diversification of the economy, to the formation of new economic roles along with the former heavy industrial functions, and to the unravelling of private property market and local town planning and development. New social groups have appeared in the local structures: such as new foreign owners and managers, foreign and national property developers, self-employed entrepreneurs. This change was accompanied by the change of the local elite; the newly emerged social groups pushed the previously powerful national corporate elite members and even local government (council) leaders into the background. The gap in income and quality of life has increased, especially between foreign and national owners, foreign and national managers, as well as between semi-skilled, skilled and unskilled workers.

The aspects of civil local communities (including advocacy and active participation in local social life) were still excluded from local decision-making mechanisms. This trend was the same as what could be experienced for many years in different researches, including the ones for the Hungarian metropolitan areas as well. According to Hungarian new town societies, in the various local and municipal decisions primarily the interests of elite groups (in the following sequence: local political leaders, big entrepreneurs, major groups of intellectuals, foreign investors) are taken into account, the aspects of the general public and of individual interests get a lower priority.

The present results of the representative research for the Hungarian 11 new town regions clearly demonstrate the new towns' population's less favourable than the average living conditions (but also in comparison to the major Hungarian cities): the average level of unemployment is higher than the national average, half of the sample examined has already been unemployed at some time. The proportion of those who (though to varying degrees) live under poor financial circumstances is high, only nearly half of the respondents stated that they comfortably get by on their income, nearly the other half live in poverty or live month to month, or can hardly make ends meet from their monthly income. Only five percent of families live without worries. The proportion of people with some kind of loan is also high. A comparison of large urban areas reveals that in the new towns the proportion of households with the lowest income is almost exactly the double of those in big cities and their surroundings *(Ferencz, 2015)*.

## *Socio-spatial polarisation trends*

According to the comparison of the results of the representative research for the 11 Hungarian new town regions with the results of the research of Hungarian large urban metropolitan areas conducted in 2005 and 2014, the current spatial structure of the new towns' society with a certain delay follows (in the long term probably it will follow in an even clearer form) the already experienced social spatial distributions of Hungarian metropolitan societies, and on this basis the European trend as well.

This finding is verified by the following facts: 1) The distributions of the spatial social structures of new town regions measured in 2015 show the manifestation of some trends revealed in Hungarian metropolitan areas in 2005 in the new towns: 2) certain trends of changes in the Hungarian metropolitan areas recorded between 2005 and 2014 have emerged among the characteristic features of the new town regions by 2015 as well.

The representative sociological survey on nine large urban regions of Hungary conducted in 2005 revealed a strong spatial social hierarchy in the inner structure of the city and in the relationship between the city and its urban periphery *(Szirmai, 2009)*. According to this, going outward from the city centre towards the urban periphery the presence of high social status (highly educat-

ed and skilled workers) groups decreased while the concentration of lower social status (low-skilled, unskilled workers) groups increased. This gradual hierarchical decrease, however, has been broken by advanced and less advanced[1] suburban zones; in the advanced suburban zones the concentration of higher social status groups was higher than the sample average, while it was lower in less advanced suburban zones.

In 2014 the social hierarchy of metropolitan areas began to dissolve, the social structure of individual districts became more balanced: the highest social status (graduates and the highest wage earners) occupied more and more space in inner city quarters, but their ratio has also increased in the outer districts; the difference in the proportion of higher social status population between the advanced and less advanced suburban zones has disappeared. Thus, the higher social status groups have pushed the lower social status groups out of inner city spaces, and at the same time they have invaded the less advanced suburban zones as well *(for more details see: Szirmai–Ferencz, 2015; Csizmady–Ferencz, 2016)*.

The representative sociological survey on Hungarian new town regions conducted in 2015 indicates the contemporary manifestation of the metropolitan trends, revealed in the year 2005, in the context of two correlations. One of them is noticeable in the context of cities and their surroundings. According to this, dichotomies between inner city quarters and suburban zones can be observed between new town centres and their urban peripheries: the population of developed suburban zones has a better social structure than less advanced urban peripheries. The other aspect is manifested in the inner parts of cities, by the hierarchical location of the educated, more qualified social groups. According to the trends seen in large urban areas, going outward from the city centre towards the urban periphery the presence of high social status (highly educated and skilled workers) groups hierarchically decreased while the concentration of lower social status (low-skilled, unskilled workers) groups increased but only in the case of inner city parts and transition zones. The social structure of the

[1] The choice of developed and underdeveloped suburban settlements was made on the basis of the ranking number method by aggregating some basic statistical indicators (housing, education, income, tax payment, unemployment etc.) then thematising them according to development level.

suburban zones of new towns brings to mind one of the latest trends measured in 2014: the moving of higher social status (educated, skilled workers, managers) further away from the city centre, as well as the exclusion of lower social status groups from the city centre and from the transition zones, especially into the transition zones and underdeveloped urban neighbourhoods.

Behind the changes global urbanisation, partly the acceleration of suburbanisation, partly a subtle, but already unfolding gentrification can be found. In the 1990s in new towns suburbanisation also accelerated thanks to the needs of the middle-class to move out of the town, and to their more dynamic space occupation in the smaller neighbouring settlements attractive for them. As a result of increasing housing and real estate prices in the inner cities and as a result of the increase in the number of impoverished residents the number of people moving out of downtown parts has risen. Naturally, the target areas of the two types of social groups do not match: the members of higher social status, better-income groups increasingly sought to move into more developed suburban areas, while the lower social status, low income groups chose less developed suburban settlements as their destination.

The latest research data show that the intentions to move today are not really typical, only a few percent of the respondents want to and some who would like to, but cannot move out. And obviously the social problems of the involved play a role, poverty, or unemployment. But it is also due to the fact that the inner quarters of new towns in the last few years were restored and renovated. This financial support system of the European Union played a significant role in this: approximately 90% of the costs of urban regeneration were financed by the EU, so the necessity of involving local resources was insignificant. The towns' historical parts were declared protected for the preservation of the socialist realist architectural style and heritage. All this served for the trends of further closing up to other types of towns.

## Social polarisation among the post-socialist new towns

### *Impacts of the transition period*

The crisis and fall of socialist regimes, the regime changes emerging in 1989-1990, the evolution of market economy, the privatisation of the state owned land, real estate and housing properties, the retreat of state territorial and municipal planning, the formation of their local variant, the emergence of market actors (real estate developers, investors) the impact of globalisation and European integration processes created a completely new situation for the municipalities of the surveyed countries, including new towns. They (as the previous chapters described) responded to these trends in different ways: some of them were successful and others were far less prepared for the changes, for the economic and social innovations.

The success or failure of the transition depended on the historically conditioned situation as well; on the conditions in which the change of regime, the processes shaping the market economy end the social system emerged. Compared to other town types it can generally be concluded that for these new towns the transition was a more difficult process. This is partly due to the fact that the socialist urban development, the characteristic features of the redistributive distribution mechanisms prevailed with a greater than the average strength, and partly to the still existing dependencies on the state (most recently on the European Union), the local government's and the local society's past (and even present) hopes associated with this in public thinking when other settlements were already seeking the way for their own renewal. The global economic impacts also differentially affected these areas (as well), the privatisations of large state firms proved unsuccessful in case of several new towns, foreign and national investors showed little interest in the new town regions.

The kind of corporate culture which was rather common knowledge among old town residents and which was present even during the communist regime, often only implicitly in the background, preserved in small family businesses was less known for the citizens of new towns. The citizens of traditional towns remembered more the life styles of relative autonomy, independence

from the state, and under which they knew better how to survive the tight state dependencies and how to create individual freedom in the midst of the dependency on the state. The employees of large state-owned enterprises did not really have the chance to develop such skills. Among other things, because the citizens of new towns, or their parents many years before left behind their old small-town, rural environment where they were born or where they were growing up and accepted not only the convenience of new town life, its superiority (in the contemporary sense), but also the very limited possibilities of their control over their own life. And with this they almost refused or ignored all the old, for example entrepreneurial models, which could have been used (in favourable conditions) under the regime change.

## *Polarisation features*

Today's new towns and their regions are by no means a homogeneous milieu. The formerly winning settlements under the social, economic and political conditions and advocacy mechanisms of the socialist system turned to be losers during the transition but also the losers themselves have become differentiated. The studies presenting the Polish and Slovak towns clearly reveal the differences in internal polarisation, the differences between advanced, dynamic, and between stagnant or already crisis regions *(Węcławowicz–Hajda, 2016; Gajdoš–Moravanská, 2016)*. The Hungarian data show similar internal structural differences, including a variety of statistical analyses *(Csizmady, 2016; Rechnitzer–Berkes–Páthy, 2016)* but the results of individual case studies as well *(Baranyai, 2016; Berki, 2016; Halász, 2016; Schuchmann, 2016)*.

Based on the analyses, three different groups of new towns and new town regions have been formulated: one group includes developed new towns: Százhalombatta, Paks, and Tiszaújváros, but Tatabánya also belongs here. But it may include the surveyed Polish new town of Tychy and the Slovak new town of Nová Dubnica as well. These are the regions that could easily adapt to the requirements of market society due to various reasons: the crisis was not as deep as elsewhere, they had favourable local endowments, for example, economic functions important for the state, and the consequent government subsidies, had good geographical location and transport positions, or the local presence of foreign

direct investment. The characteristics of the local societies, such as the young educated skilled labour force also helped them. As a result of this, their unemployment rate is below average and their net migration is positive.

The second statistical group contains the stagnant towns. Ajka, Dunaújváros, Oroszlány, Várpalota may be listed here. These are the urban areas that were basically able to handle the crisis, which more or less managed to maintain their population and where the local residents' educational attainment is relatively favourable. The directions of further steps and resources, however, are uncertain, mainly due to their strong dependence on global economy.

The third group includes the real losers of the regime change: Kazincbarcika, Komló, Ózd are the members of it. These are the regions which completely lost their particularly advantageous positions gained during the state socialist regime, especially in the 1950s and 1960s and got into a very difficult situation during the transition. Their former urban economies gradually eroded, their operating state companies degraded, shut down, or having been transformed into small firms are vegetating now. Foreign and domestic direct investments avoid these areas, the young marketable population living there goes away as there are few chances to break out locally, including business opportunities; for this reason these towns will gradually lose their population. In these (so-called) local societies of new town crisis regions, the ratio of people without primary school education is high and the proportion of people with certificate of secondary education and especially university diploma is low. Compared to the national average unemployment is high, especially among the uneducated and younger age groups. Thus, the renewal of these regions are substantially hindered by the local social features.

## A "new" urban development model or merely an unfulfilled promise?

Based on the achieved results it must be declared that there are no clear answers to the question asked in the introductory part of the book. Since certain facts and processes suggest that a specific, new town development model has been born, which is different from the traditional model of town development. Namely along

the sections of historical heritage and the regime change, on the basis of social structuring still bearing the marks of the past but also the consequences of the current processes, showing features different from other urban types. Other factors, however, suggest that in fact we are not witnessing the organisation of a new quality, historical effects are insignificant and as a result of today's determinative social and economic processes similarities with other types of towns are more typical and differences are less typical. To give a clear answer is also complicated by the fact that the same processes that cause the similarities also ensure the preservation of differences. This can be seen in the case of urbanistic features, in the characteristic features of social structure and in the changes, or in the preservation of the original conditions of social, spatial location.

To find the best possible answers the three main issues, that is the urbanistic features, the specifics of social structure and the characteristic features of the social, spatial location and in their context the original conditions characteristic of the time of their formation, and the trends of change occurred over the years are put on imaginary scales of 0-10 points. Of course the scales indicate the processes schematically, without providing a deeper content. Starting from 0 indicating the main endowments of the past and moving towards 10 on the scale indicates the signs of the gradual departure from the past. The endpoints of the scales mark the current features.

The first scale represents the new towns' urban, architectural conditions and their transformations, the second scale represents changes in social structures, and the third one the past and present characteristics of spatial social structure. The number of scales can be increased if needed, but the book's thematic aims justify the examination of mainly these three dimensions, and an additional factor, namely the new towns' position of in the regime change of 1990, the manifestation of social, economic, and political transitions in new towns, their successful or even unsuccessful adaptation to market conditions, to global conditions. This factor is different from the previous ones, since it is only about the present days; it places today's conditions on the scale.

1) On the starting points of the scale presenting urban sections expressing the transition, the historical determinations of the analysed new towns we find the rather homogeneous features, including the mostly protected inner city zones of the socialist realist architecture *(Kissfazakas, 2016),* as well as the buildings of the original settlements, of the old rural, small-town environment. At the points of later periods the picture is more varied, as besides the historical parts, the often boring, one-dimensional homogeneous (prefabricated technology based) housing estates having been built from state funds, as well as the slowly growing suburbs are present. At the end of the scale the already heterogeneous creations of earlier periods, but mainly the market formatted, recently built, and uniquely faced districts can be found. However, this mixed image provides less than what today's similar-sized cities offer, and most of all does not come up to what larger cities show.

2) At the starting point of the scale representing the social structure of towns we can find homogeneous new town communities made up of mostly unskilled, young working families, which is typical for the first phase of urban development processes; the subsequent points of the scale represent constantly changing now more differentiated social structures: the more qualified, better educated new local societies still with mostly young families and a high proportion of workers but they are already the social groups of market economy.

3) The starting point of the scale representing the spatial social structure represents the relatively homogeneous social structure, subdued segregation, and the lack of suburbanisation. At the subsequent points more segregated social units, the dichotomous contradictions between the town and its surroundings and the increasing spatial and social polarisation appear.

4) On the scale representing the fourth additional factor, the investigated Eastern and Central European, namely the Hungarian, Polish and Slovak new towns would be also given different rankings: because of the differences of the historical backgrounds, of the special features of the Eastern European systems by countries, but also because of the differentiation of the European integration and global impacts. From the aspects of the success positions achieved during the regime change the investigated Polish and Slovak towns receive better ranking, but also the group of

Hungarian new towns found as more advanced as a result of a variety of different types of analyses. Similarly to this, the towns of the two other groups may get worse rankings.

Based on the thematic differentiations of the new towns' placement on the imaginary scale, the contemporary relevancies of the characteristic features of new towns can be defined: the features at the starting point of the scale would represent the present day manifestation, the contemporary viability of the historically established features of new towns with their difference from other town types: from the aspects of either urban or social structural or spatial social position. The subsequent points of the scale are representing the transformation processes, the end points are fixing the now typical states and at the same time they express the new towns' convergence tendencies to other town types, the trends of harmonisation with today's urban systems and the trends of integration. According to this, contemporary new towns have preserved something important from the past in terms of all the analysed dimensions, from the "artificial" town nature and at the same time in all the examined dimensions transformation and strong convergence to the characteristic features of other town types can be detected.

One advantage of the scale analysis is that it highlights the similarities and differences. Another advantage is that it demonstrates multi-factor differentiation between the new towns and draws the attention to the evolution of spatial, social inequalities between new towns, a so far not experienced spatial form of social inequality in the Eastern and the Central European including the Hungarian settlement network. This new spatial social inequality system has developed as a consequence of the 1989-1990 social, political and economic changes, their processes, and the mechanisms determining the transition, but historical heritage had also played a role in it.

So for the time being there is no question that the past and its effects have disappeared. Based on today's facts, it seems that there will always be differences between the two types of urban development model and their characteristics, but what these differences will be, depends on the development pathways of cities, on the innovation capacity of different models as well, and what the stakeholder local and regional social actors will do with their historical heritage.

The future processes are clearly unpredictable. It is not yet known what will happen in the future with today's constantly changing post-socialist new towns. What factors will be stronger, the differences or the convergence processes? This depends on a number of micro- and macro-mechanisms and their impacts as well. On this basis, the real question today is not whether this new model has been created or not, but rather what the new towns will do with their heritage. Are they able to build on the peculiarities they exclusively possess? Are they able to build on their past, on their special architectural endowments, on the activities of the inhabitants who are committed to their town? Are they able to actually accommodate the economic and social requirements of today and are they able to act for the benefit of transition? Are they able to renew? Do they have the ability to establish smaller and broader regional cooperation frameworks where cooperation, the joint exploitation of benefits and not the individual competition, and not the other party's displacement is the goal? These questions are not only to be answered in the future, but the answers to them may decide the future of the new towns and the organisational structures of the potential new models of urban development as well.

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## Urban development plans

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# APPENDIX

# List of Authors

**Dr. Nóra Baranyai Ph.D**
*Politologist, sociologist*
Research fellow, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Centre for Economic and Regional Studies, Institute for Regional Studies
baranyain@rkk.hu

**Judit Berkes**
*Sociologist*
Research fellow, Széchenyi István University, Kautz Gyula Faculty of Economics, Department of Regional Studies and Public Policy
Ph.D candidate, Széchenyi István University, Doctoral School of Regional and Economic Sciences
berkes.judit@sze.hu

**Dr. Márton Berki Ph.D**
*Geographer*
Assistant lecturer, Eötvös Loránd University, Faculty of Science, Department of Social and Economic Geography
Junior research fellow, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Centre for Social Sciences, Institute for Sociology
berkimarton@yahoo.com

**Dr. Adrienne Csizmady Ph.D.**
*Sociologist*
Senior research fellow, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Centre for Social Sciences, Institute for Sociology
Associate professor of Sociology, Eötvös Loránd University, Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Research Methodology
csizmady.adrienne@tk.mta.hu

**Dr. Zoltán Ferencz Ph.D**
*Sociologist*
Research fellow, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Centre for Social Sciences, Institute for Sociology
ferencz.zoltan@tk.mta.hu

**Dr. Peter Gajdoš Ph.D**
*Sociologist*
Senior research fellow, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Institute for Sociology
peter.gajdos@savba.sk

**Levente Halász**
*Geographer*
Research fellow, Kodolányi János University of Applied Sciences, Department of European Urban and Regional Studies
Ph.D candidate, Eötvös Loránd University, Doctoral School of Earth Sciences
halaszlevente@hotmail.com

**Dr. Kornélia Kissfazekas Ph.D**
*Architect, urban planner*
Assistant professor, Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Faculty of Architecture, Department of Urban Planning and Design
kissfazekas@gmail.com

**Dagmara Mliczyńska Hajda**
*Urban advisor*
Ph.D candidate, Polish Academy of Sciences, Institute for Sociology
dagmara@mliczynska.pl

**Dr. Katarína Moravanská Ph.D**
*Sociologist*
Research fellow, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Institute for Sociology
katarina.moravanska@savba.sk

**Ádám Páthy**
*Sociologist*
Research fellow, Széchenyi István University, Kautz Gyula Faculty of Economics, Department of Regional Studies and Public Policy
Ph.D candidate, Széchenyi István University, Doctoral School of Regional and Economic Sciences
pathya@rkk.hu

**Prof. Dr. János Rechnitzer D.Sc.**
*Economist*
University professor, head of department, Széchenyi István University, Kautz Gyula Faculty of Economics, Department of Regional Studies and Public Policy
Head of doctoral School, Széchenyi István University, Doctoral School of Regional and Economic Sciences
rechnj@sze.hu

**Dr. Júlia Schuchmann Ph.D**
*Geographer*
Lecturer, Kodolányi János Unviersity of Applied Sciences, Department of Communication and Media Studies
Junior research fellow, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Centre for Economic and Regional Studies Institute for Regional Studies
s.juliet82@gmail.com

**Prof. Dr. Viktória Szirmai D.Sc.**
*Doctor of Sociological Sciences, Széchenyi Prize winner*
Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Centre for Social Sciences, Institute for Sociology
University professor, head of department, Kodolányi János University of Applied Sciences, Department of European Urban and Regional Studies
Szirmai.Viktória@tk.mta.hu

**Prof. Dr. Grzegorz Węcławowicz D.Sc.**
*Geographer*
Chairman of the Scientific Council, Polish Academy of Sciences, Institute of Geography and Spatial Organisation, Department of Urban and Population Studies
g.wecla@twarda.pan.pl

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# PHOTOS

# Tatabánya

City centre


Photo: Júlia Schuchmann

Socialist Realist housing estate

Photo: Júlia Schuchmann

High social-status family house quarter


Photo: Júlia Schuchmann

Housing estates in the Inner City

Photo: Júlia Schuchmann

# Dunaújváros

Town Hall

Photo: Nóra Baranyai

Partly renovated housing estate from the 1970s

Photo: Nóra Baranyai

Detached house quarter newly inhabited by local elite people

Photo: Nóra Baranyai

Symbol of Socialist industrialisation: Dunaferr Iron Works

Photo: Nóra Baranyai

# Komló

Skyline with the power plant and the inner city

Photo: Levente Halász

Miners' brick houses from the 1950s


Photo: Levente Halász

City centre with the 'Pyramid Building'

Photo: Levente Halász

Contrasts: Modernist housing estates from the 1970s and high social-strata detached house quarter

Photo: Levente Halász

# Kazincbarcika

Rehabilitated main street


Photo: Márton Berki

Demolition of low-comfort blocks of flats in Hámán Kató St.

Photo: Márton Berki

Examples of urban renewal: Coloured walls of housing estates

Photo: Márton Berki

Venue of segregation in low-comfort former wine cellars in the outskirts

Photo: Márton Berki

# Nová Dubnica

Aerial view of the town

Photo: Peter Gajdoš

Housing estate

Photo: Peter Gajdoš

The town's main square

Photo: Peter Gajdoš

Newly constructed semi-detached house quarter

Photo: Peter Gajdoš

# Tychy

Main square

Photo: Grzegorz Węcławowicz

New residental blocks in light of urban renewal

Photo: Grzegorz Węcławowicz

Inner city park and the town's biggest housing estate

Photo: Grzegorz Węcławowicz

Socialist blocks of flats


Photo: Grzegorz Węcławowicz

# Authors of the book

Nóra Baranyai

Judit Berkes

Márton Berki

Adrienne Csizmady

Zoltán Ferencz

Peter Gajdoš

Levente Halász

Kornélia Kissfazekas

Dagmara Mliczyńska Hajda

Katarína Moravanská

Ádám Páthy

János Rechnitzer

Júlia Schuchmann

Viktória Szirmai

Grzegorz Węcławowicz

## Viktória Szirmai, editor of the book

**Széchenyi Prize winner sociologist,**
**Doctor of Hungarian Academy of Sciences,**
**Research professor, Hungarian Academy of Sciences**
**Centre for Social Sciences Institute for Sociology,**
**University professor and head of department,**
**Kodolányi János University of Applied Sciences**

...the real question today is not whether this new model has been created or not, but rather what the new towns will do with their heritage. Are they able to build on the peculiarities they exclusively possess? Are they able to build on their past, on their special architectural endowments, on the activities of the inhabitants who are committed to their town? Are they able to actually accommodate the economic and social requirements of today and to act for the benefit of transition? Are they able to renew? Do they have the ability to establish smaller and broader regional cooperation frameworks where cooperation, the joint exploitation of benefits and not the individual competition, and not the other party's displacement is the goal? These questions are not only to be answered in the future, but the answers to them may decide the future of the new towns and the organisational structures of the potential new models of urban development as well.

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